





IN STEWART
TIMES



Charles I
Van Dyck

Fr.

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

IN STEWART TIMES

*SHORT CHARACTER-STUDIES OF THE
GREAT FIGURES OF THE PERIOD*

BY

EDITH L. ELIAS

AUTHOR OF

"IN TUDOR TIMES" "THE WONDERFUL VOYAGES OF GULLIVER"
"IN THE GREAT COLONIAL BUSH" ETC.



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Preface

THIS book is intended as a companion volume to *In Tudor Times*, and it is arranged upon the same plan. In adopting the spelling, "Stewart," I have followed Professor Tout, and other recent historians. The principal books which I have used, either as sources of information, or for purposes of quotation, are as follows :—

Macaulay's *History of England*; Guizot's *English Revolution*; Green's *History of the English People*; Napier's *Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose*; Calamy's *Life of Baxter*; Professor Tout's *History of England*; Milman's *Annals of St Paul's*; Forster's *Life of Sir John Eliot*; Pepys' *Diary*; Lucy Aikin's *Court of James the First*; Arber's Reprints in *An English Garner*; Evelyn's *Diary*; Carlyle's *Letters of Oliver Cromwell*; Stanhope's *History of Queen Anne*; Clements Markham's *Life of Fairfax*; Guizot's *Life of Oliver Cromwell*; Lodge's *Portraits of Illustrious Personages*; several volumes in the "English Men of Letters Series"; and the contemporary songs and ballads in the "Roxburgh" and "Bagford" collections respectively.

In selecting the characters for the essays, many important figures have had to be excluded. The aim has been to choose representatives from as many aspects of the period as possible, without giving undue preference to any single phase.

EDITH L. ELIAS

Contents

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	11

PHASE I—THE KINGSHIP AND THE PROTECTORATE

JAMES I	19
CHARLES I.	29
OLIVER CROMWELL.	39
CHARLES II	52
JAMES II	67
WILLIAM III AND MARY	75
ANNE	85

PHASE II—THE STATE

GEORGE VILLIERS, FIRST DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM	95
SIR JOHN ELIOT	105
JOHN HAMPDEN	115
THOMAS WENTWORTH, EARL OF STRAFFORD	122
EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON	129
ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY	136
GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX	143
SIDNEY, EARL GODOLPHIN	150
ROBERT SPENCER, EARL OF SUNDERLAND	156

PHASE III—THE ARMY

	PAGE
THOMAS, LORD FAIRFAX	163
JAMES GRAHAM, MARQUIS OF MONTROSE	172
GEORGE MONCK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE	180
JOHN CHURCHILL, DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH	188

PHASE IV—RELIGION

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY	197
JEREMY TAYLOR, BISHOP OF DOWN	205
RICHARD BAXTER	213
WILLIAM PENN	222

PHASE V—SCIENCE AND THE FINE ARTS

FRANCIS BACON, VISCOUNT ST ALBANS	229
SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN	239
SIR ISAAC NEWTON	248
INDEX	255

List of Illustrations

CHARLES I	(<i>Van Dyck</i>)	<i>Frontispiece</i>
		PAGE
JAMES I		20
OLIVER CROMWELL	(<i>Samuel Cooper</i>)	40
CHARLES II	(<i>John Greenhill</i>)	52
WILLIAM III	(<i>Jan Wyck</i>)	76
THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM	(<i>G. Honthorst</i>)	98
SIR JOHN ELIOT		108
THE EARL OF STRAFFORD	(<i>Van Dyck</i>)	122
THE EARL OF CLARENDON	(<i>Gerard Soest</i>)	130
THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY	(<i>J. Greenhill</i>)	140
EARL GODOLPHIN	(<i>Sir Godfrey Kneller</i>)	154
GEORGE MONCK		180
THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH	(<i>J. Closterman</i>)	188
ARCHBISHOP LAUD	(<i>Van Dyck</i>)	198
RICHARD BAXTER		214
SIR ISAAC NEWTON	(<i>Robert Walker</i>)	248

In Stewart Times

Introduction

“**H**ER Majesty is dead.”

The words broke on the ear of Bolingbroke like a knell. It was the 1st of August in the year 1714, and Queen Anne had just passed away. She had died on the very eve of a crisis. Whigs and Tories were in the midst of a sharp conflict, and the question of the succession was in dispute. By the Act of Settlement, passed in 1701, the crown belonged to George, son of Sophia, Electress of Hanover. But the claims of the Pretender had still to be taken into account, and Jacobite hearts beat fast with hopes of a restoration. Plans for the carrying out of this scheme had long been afoot. It only needed a few more weeks of time, and everything would have been ready. The death of the queen had come earlier than had been expected, and now everything was thrown into confusion. Bolingbroke gave a bitter laugh.

“In six weeks more,” he said, “we should have put things in such a condition that there would have been nothing to fear. But Oxford was removed on Tuesday ; the queen died on Sunday ! What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us ! ”

Full of the most uneasy thoughts, we imagine he sought

out a secluded corner, where he might think in quiet. All sorts of plans ran riot through his quick brain. Then suddenly a spell of musing fell upon him. So Anne was dead ! The last of the Stewarts,—for there was little hope now of the Pretender ever mounting the throne of England. What a dynasty it had been ! What ups and downs of fortune its sovereigns had known. What dark and fearful things had cast a shadow upon the pages of its history. There was James the First. It was a hundred years since he had first been called King of England. Or was it more than a hundred ? Bolingbroke pondered for a moment. Yes, it was more than a century ; for James had begun his rule in 1603, and it was now 1714. But after all it was only a small space of time ; the lives of two men, not more. Yet what changes had taken place since then. James had come to the throne, ignorant and full of pride. He had been met by a parliament just awakening to its powers of control. The king had been short-sighted and arrogant : the Commons had proved themselves equally stiff. A breach had been made between sovereign and people, and every year till the death of James it had grown steadily wider. Then came the reign of King Charles the First. Bolingbroke's gloom deepened at the remembrance. Such a king he might have been, and yet he had met with ruin. Again Bolingbroke's mind dwelt for a second upon that breach, begun by James, and widened, greatly widened, by Charles. The thought did not please him, and he passed on hastily to the Restoration. Ah ! that was the time in English history ! when men's hearts were aglow with

loyalty, when every lip held a welcome for the Mayflower King. The thought of the corruption and vice which had disgraced the Court of the second Charles darted suddenly across his mind. It annoyed Bolingbroke that he should remember these sinister traditions, and he brushed them hastily aside, and passed on to the reign of James the Second. He remembered that he himself had been seven years old when the Duke of York put on the crown. Seven ! and now he was thirty-two, and James had been dead these nine years. Ah ! but his death had taken place long before then. The Revolution of 1688, when James had fled, like a coward, to France ; that had really been his end. And now Anne was dead—Anne, who had been queen since 1702. Who was to succeed her ? George of Hanover, a German prince. So the house of Stewart had come to an end. Queen Anne was dead.

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With an effort Bolingbroke shook himself free from his musings. If the last of the Stewarts had passed away, he himself was still living, a young man with ambitions to realise. It was time to be thinking out the next step in his own career.

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The Stewart period in history is an intermediate stage in the transition from mediævalism to modern times. But for the strong rule of Elizabeth the mediæval spirit would not have lingered so long. It was her firm control, and the influence of her strong personality, that kept the change from happening as rapidly as it would otherwise have done. James came to the throne greatly hampered.

He was a stranger to England and English ways ; and he made very little effort to grapple with his position. He regarded as upstarts and rebels, men who were simply voicing the subtle change that was taking place in the whole nation. When James and his Commons came to grief in their relations with one another, the trouble was really much more serious than it at first appeared. It was not merely a contest of wills between a king and his parliament ; it was a struggle for hereditary rights, between the Crown and the Nation. To a large extent the Great Rebellion was a natural expression of the political evolution of the country. For a time a panacea was found in the establishment of a Commonwealth under a strong and determined chief. With the death of Oliver Cromwell the new system at once collapsed. Conditions of government that under his rule had seemed excellent, suddenly became hateful. There was no system ; no security. The instinct of the nation again turned to monarchy as the only safe course, and Charles the Second was restored. But though there was once more a king, the position of the people was very different from before. They had made good their claim to control the fortunes of the Throne. Future sovereigns would be obliged to keep back from any interference with the civil rights of the nation.

Nevertheless this was not the end of the difficulty. Side by side with the civil struggle had been a religious growth, which the struggles at Westminster and on Marston Moor incidentally had quickened. The spiritual side of the nation had been passing through a series of changes.

The people were groping blindly towards the principle of freedom in worship, just as they had fought for freedom in the State. James the Second failed to understand how matters lay. His folly brought about the Revolution of 1688, and the nation emerged from a second struggle, secure at last in both political and religious rights. The firm rule of William the Third settled the elements of unrest, and Anne's reign showed the fruits of the settlement in the great men of letters who adorned her time. Since the accession of James the First, England had endured many crises. She had passed through Civil War and Revolution. Her fame abroad had been woefully tarnished ; her trade had been desperately hindered. Nevertheless before the dynasty saw its end the nation began to taste the reward of her struggles. Under William the Third she more than won back her lustre abroad. Commerce rapidly improved, and colonising schemes met with unlooked-for success. In spite of dark hours, and shocks, and struggles, the age of the Stewarts is one of moment and glory in English history. Though there had been wars and every sort of disturbance, the social conditions of the race had rapidly improved. Up to the time of Anne, houses were still small and low, but during her reign dwellings became very much better. Plain, flat, comfortable houses began to take the place of the low-roofed, overhanging buildings, and more light and air brought better health to the nation. Glass was still a novelty, though it was used in some of the coaches of the wealthy. In his diary Pepys records, that as Lady Peterborough was driving in her great glass coach she

saw a friend pass by. Wishing to speak to her, Lady Peterborough put her head outside, and was badly cut, for "the glass was so clear that she thought it had been open, and so ran her head through the glass." Dress among fashionable folk was rich and extravagant, and gorgeous garments graced the streets. Though the Puritans eyed frills sourly, and went about in plain coats of a sober shade, frivolous women made their husbands groan with despair at their dress-bills. A ballad written in 1686 shows the habit of the day,—not so very unlike modern times :

*" I have a wife, the more's my care,
Who like a gaudy peacock goes
In top-knots, patches, powder'd hair."*

Getting up early was unfashionable. It was often noon before my lady rose to begin her toilet, and it was five before she was ready to appear, after which she set off for a ball or play, and so the night was spent in pleasure and gaiety.

So much for the dress and extravagance of the period. There was another and darker side. For in the midst of show and luxury, lurked the spectre of poverty. And while ladies of fashion went by in their glass coaches, hungry-eyed men and women worked hard for a wage upon which they could barely live. "Sweating" is not entirely a modern vice. In 1677 a bitter song dealt with this very point :

*" We will make them work hard for sixpence a day,
Though a shilling they deserve, if they had their full pay:
By poor people's labour we fill up our purse,
Although we do get it with many a curse."*

Every sort of game was popular under Charles the Second. The cruel sports of bear-baiting and bull-fights were still practised, but they were not in favour with the humane. Simpler amusements, such as the game of pall-mall, were very fashionable, and brought hundreds of people out into the fresh air. Exercise, fresh air, and the general betterment of life soon began to make an improvement in the national physique. Women, as well as men, grew strong and hardy, and an amusing contemporary ballad tells the story of one of these vigorous dames :

*" I have been abused of late, by some of the Poet's crew,
Who say I broke my husband's pate, which I did never do.
'Tis true I his ears did cuff, and gave him a kick or two,
For this I had just cause enough, because he would nothing do."*

Literature, music, painting, architecture, all flourished under the Stewarts. But before all, the age is famous for its development of science. In 1662 Charles the Second recognised the foundation of the Royal Society, and from this date science became recognised as a separate and definite branch of knowledge. Robert Boyle and Isaac Newton are only two names of the great men who delighted the world with their investigations, or surprised simple folk with their experiments. The world indeed seemed in process of being born anew. All sorts of wonderful ideas crowded in upon men's minds, and the close of the Stewart dynasty found the nation highly sensitive to new impressions. Very rapid had been the development of the race in those hundred odd years during which the Stewarts had sat upon the throne of England.



Phase I—The Kingship and the Protectorate

JAMES I

*“ One who was, in his own opinion, the greatest master of king-craft that ever lived, but who was, in truth, one of those kings whom God seems to send for the express purpose of hastening revolutions.”*²

MACAULAY

WITH the passing of Elizabeth, the great Tudor dynasty came to an end. The shock of the removal of a sovereign at once so revered and so dominant, left a deep impress upon the nation ; nevertheless there was no anxiety for the future mingled with the people's grief. On the contrary, the brightest hopes were entertained. The Crown was passing into the hands of one who, by a fortunate accident of birth, naturally united the kingdoms of England and Scotland. This in itself was a thing of no mean importance. The commercial growth of either nation had been incessantly kept back by rivalry and suspicion. It now seemed probable that these petty jealousies concerning trade and intercourse, would cease with the advent of a king wearing the crowns of the two kingdoms. The coming of James was thus the signal for more than ordinary rejoicing. To his ill-concealed annoyance, his entry into the city gave occasion for huge crowds to draw together. His progress was hindered by the throng, and at every delay he showed a petulance and an impatience which contrasted very ill

with the gracious behaviour of the late queen. Abashed, the crowds drew back, muttering a little, but excusing him in their hearts. Their first glimpse of the sovereign had not impressed them favourably, but loyalty kept them from so much as hinting at their feeling. His personal appearance, as well as his bearing, helped to increase their sense of disappointment. Elizabeth had prided herself upon her looks, and if in all honesty beauty must be denied her, she had at least conducted herself with regal dignity. But James was neither handsome nor dignified. His height was ordinary, though an inclination to stoutness made him seem shorter. A physical weakness made his gait stumbling and uncertain. A strange dread of attack led him to protect his body in an absurd fashion, with endless wrappings and waddings, so that, packed up in this odd way, he presented a ludicrous figure, quite without kingliness. His eyes were large and uneasy, and his tongue, malformed from birth, hung from his mouth, and made his eating and drinking disgusting. He had no fondness for water, and he never did more than wipe his hands with the end of a damp cloth. Those who had seen Queen Mary, his mother, carried with them an unforgettable remembrance of a young and lovely face, and it was hard for them to believe that the clownish figure before them could be really her son.

It was March when James first entered London, and the following July his coronation was celebrated. A spirit of joyousness still filled the air, and epithets as enthusiastic as any showered upon Elizabeth were flung on his pathway. "Now he is amongst us, God long preserve him over us ! whose presence makes old men say, 'Now that we have seen him we have lived long enough,' " cried an eyewitness of the procession, and the words were the expression of the general mind. Poets saluted him



James I

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.



as born to be "England's true joy"; and in their abandon they even went so far as to apply the word "sacred" to his person, and term him a "mortal God." This part of their offering at least must have been pleasing to James, for already he was brooding upon that strange theory of the divine right of kings, which he afterwards unfolded before an astonished people. But for the most part he listened with ungracious impatience to the addresses, made to him at the various stopping-places on the line of his progress. In particular, he unkindly ignored "Old Hind," a man of nearly eighty summers, who had seen four sovereigns come and go, and who now waited, quivering with eagerness, to pay his tribute to the fifth. James passed by without so much as a glance, and the old man fell back, bewildered and disappointed. Elizabeth would never have acted thus. However tedious she might find State functions, she at least had the grace and high breeding to carry them off with a smile. But James was too self-centred to understand the patriotic devotion implied in these eager little deeds, and he was too unsympathetic to see that they were really an expression of affection. He looked upon himself as a great thinker, and a supreme master of statecraft. Nothing delighted him more than to address an audience forbidden by etiquette from replying to him. But when it was a question of showing courtesy as a listener, he made no effort at even ordinary politeness. At the end of the first few months of his reign, a close observer could have foreseen the difficulties that might be likely to arise between the nation and this king, who responded so coldly to the warm welcome showered upon him.

Thus did James take up his power, amid every show of enthusiasm and delight. Twenty-two years later he laid it down in very different circumstances. For, long before

twenty-two years had passed, the nation had grown to dislike him heartily. The shouts of delight at his coming, very soon turned into sneers.

James brought with him from Scotland two ideas firmly fixed in his mind. One was a feeling of dislike for the Puritans; the other, a strong belief in the right of a king to act according to his own personal desire. A coward at heart, he feared the Puritans, because he saw in them an opposition to sovereignty; and there was no saying in which he indulged more often, or more fondly, than the words "No bishop, no king." In this catch phrase he saw, or fancied he saw, a safeguard against the revolution which had been begun under Henry VIII. But the wisest proverb was powerless to stem a movement so filled with vitality as the Reformation. James might place his pebbles in the way, but he might as well think thereby to keep back a river, as to check with mere sayings a spiritual evolution, which not Europe itself could control.

The Puritan divines who came to the Conference at Hampton Court in 1604, went away grumbling and angry. And not without cause. For after making much display of his own knowledge of theology, James hotly concluded the discussion by declaring: "If you aim at a Scottish presbytery, it agrees as well with monarchy as God and the devil. Then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my council. . . . If this be all your party hath to say I will make them conform themselves, or else harrie them out of the land, or else do worse." These words fell ominously upon the ears of men who were in deadly earnest. Hitherto the division between the different sections of the Church had not been immediately vital. In 1603 Convocation had recognised the un-Episcopal Church of Scotland "as a branch of the Holy Catholic Church of Christ," and it was

after the date of the Armada that Bishop Cooper had declared in a public tract: "All those Churches in which the Gospell, in these daies, after great darknesse was first renewed, . . . have been directed by the Spirit of God to retaine this liberty, that, in external government and other outward orders, they might choose such as they thought in wisdome and godlinesse to be most convenient for the state of their countrey, and disposition of their people. . . . I think it therefore great presumption and boldnesse . . . to binde both prince and people in respect of conscience to alter the present state, and tie themselves to a certain platforme devised by some of our neighbours, which, in the judgment of many wise and godly persons, is most unfit for the state of a kingdome."

Hampton Court, however, marked the turning of the ways, and the Conference became the signpost of parting. What had been so far merely religious schism, now took on the colour of deliberate political opposition.

In his dealings with the Catholics, James was no less unfortunate. He dreaded the one extreme almost as much as the other. In grasping at personal safety and the immediate security of the Crown, he lost sight of all large issues of statesmanship, with the result that England's power abroad speedily dwindled. Thus the country which should have been strengthened and adorned by the bond with the Scottish kingdom, by it fell swiftly from the proud position it had reached under the Tudors. Till at last it actually became the sport of the very nation whose boasted Armada it had triumphantly crushed, some five years before the "auspicious accession" of James.

If the phrase "No bishop, no king," was dear to the heart of the English sovereign, still dearer was his notion of the divine right of kings to govern as they chose. Some years before he was crowned he had explained this belief in

a work entitled "The True Law of Free Monarchy." He now set about carrying these notions into practice. With great curtness he said publicly, that "as it is atheism and blasphemy to dispute what God can do, so it is presumption and a high contempt in a subject to dispute what a king can do, or to say that a king cannot do this or that." Thoughtful men, anxious to be loyal to their king, but determined above all else to obey their conscience, pondered long over the saying. And as a result the breach between the king and his people widened. Instead of inspiring allegiance, James raised the spirit of rebellion. He did it unknown to himself. He did not realise that the affection of the nation was slipping away, and he was bitterly surprised and disappointed later on, when it came home to him that true loyalty can never be bought, but must always be given. This was a lesson Elizabeth had never needed to learn. Her quick instinct had taught it her from the first. James was more of a blunderer. He chased the phantom of supreme power, thinking it the birthright of monarchs. His action made division easy. In fact it hinted plainly that a gulf lay between a king and his people. Elizabeth, on the other hand, never had any illusions about the right of sovereigns. But by identifying herself with the nation, she found in unity the supremest of "supreme power."

Four parliaments met under James. The first of these was not summoned till a year after the accession, when the Commons were chafing at the king's neglect. They were men of an earnest temper; honestly anxious to look after the interests of the nation; honestly eager to obey their monarch. James quite failed to understand their attitude. He prided himself on his knowledge and his statesmanship; but though he could argue eloquently,

he could not manage men, and after a time his high-flown words fell upon deaf ears. The Commons held firmly to one principle. If the king would redress grievances, they would give him supplies. From this point they would not move, and neither threats nor persuasions could reach them. The more James argued, the more resolute they became, and the effect of their attitude rapidly influenced the nation. By his tactless bullying the king was fast rousing a spirit of rebellion that he could never again tame. Men who had gladly submitted to the strong rule of Elizabeth, stiffened their lip and refused to be guided by a sovereign, whom they were beginning to hold in contempt. For this was the crowning weakness of the rule of James, he made himself of such small value in the eyes of his people, that they lost once and for all that frank delight in sovereignty, which Elizabeth had been at such pains to inspire and retain. Monarchy fell from its high estate, and it fell by the hand of a monarch. In the history of the race a critical moment had been reached. For good or ill the people were pressing on to a goal, which so far they only half understood. The time called either for a king strong enough to control the tide, or for one weak enough to submit cheerfully to the onrush of democracy. James belonged to neither type. If he had not enough personality to be master of the forces, he had too much spirit to give way helplessly before them. He objected openly and strongly to giving up the smallest right; he fought hard for his privileges. But he was doomed to defeat. At his death he left the Commons in a far stronger position than before, and in the nation at large he left the seeds of rebellion, which he had himself scattered abroad. "Of all the enemies of liberty whom Britain has produced," says Macaulay, "James was at once the most harmless and

the most provoking. His office resembled that of the man, who, in a Spanish bull fight, goads the torpid savage to fury, by shaking a red rag in the air. James was always obtruding his despotic theories on his subjects without the slightest necessity. His foolish talk exasperated them infinitely more than forced loans or benevolences would have done."

Disappointed in his management of the Commons, the sovereign fell back upon favourites, and exalted successively Robert Carr and George Villiers. The former he made Viscount Rochester, and upon the latter, the darling of his heart, he bestowed the title, Duke of Buckingham. James had always shown a liking for a fair face and a flattering tongue, in spite of his stern upbringing under the celebrated scholar, George Buchanan, who had wisely warned his young charge against those "self-constituted judges of all elegance, who perpetually season their discourse with 'your Majesty,' 'your Highness,' 'most illustrious,' and 'terms still more disgusting.' " In his behaviour towards Carr and Villiers he gave full rein to this weakness. Elizabeth's Court had not been free from ill-repute; but under James, vice ran so high, and immorality was so open, that a popular ballad sneeringly contrasted the manners of a courtier of the day with those of a gallant in the previous reign :

*" With an old study filled full of learned old books,
With an old reverend chaplain, you might know him by his looks,
With an old buttery hatch worn quite off the hooks,
And an old kitchen that maintained half-a-dozen old cooks,
Like an old Courtier of the Queen's,
And the Queen's old Courtier.*

*But to his eldest son his house and land he assign'd,
Charging him in his will to keep the old bountiful mind,*

*To be good to his old tenants and to his neighbours be kind ;
But in the ensuing ditty you shall hear how he was inclin'd,
Like a young Courtier of the King's,
And the King's young Courtier.*

*With a new study stuf't full of pamphlets and plays,
With a new chaplain, that swears faster than he prays,
With a new buttery hatch that opens once in four or five days,
And a French cook, to devise fine kickshaws and toys ;
Like a Courtier of the King's,
And the King's young Courtier.*

*With new titles of honour bought with his father's old gold,
For which sundry of his ancestors' old manors are sold ;
And this is the course most of our new gallants hold,
Which makes that good housekeeping is now grown so cold,
Among the young Courtiers of the King,
And the King's young Courtiers."*

The death of James took place in March 1625. Some few months earlier his fourth and last Parliament had met. On this occasion there had been more good feeling between the monarch and his ministers than ever before. The hated Spanish match had been prevented, and James had declared himself willing to make war on behalf of the Elector. Something akin to warm feeling stirred in the nation, and in the joy of the moment the people forgot the gloom of the past. But affection could not be reborn in a day, and the king had long since lost their hearts. His death roused little comment. Everyone hoped for better times under Charles, and the personality of James soon faded from memory. He had shown himself overbearing and selfish ; without any large motives ; without either sympathy or tact ; without charity to forgive, or sense to forget. But he was also a man of academic parts, and in his own narrow way he ruled as he thought a king should. In insisting upon the theory of "divine right" he firmly

believed that he was upholding the greatness of the Crown. He did not see that in reality he was pulling it down ; that its fall would surely come ; and that his hand would be remembered as having begun the work of ruin.

CHARLES I

“ On the whole, say not, good reader, as is often done, ‘ It was then all one as now.’ Good reader, it was considerably different then from now. . . . The Ages differ greatly, even infinitely from one another.”

CARLYLE

CHARLES I. became king in 1625. He was then twenty-five years of age, handsome in face and attractive in disposition. He looked an ideal monarch. But never did king undertake duties for which he was more unfitted, than Charles when he accepted the dread responsibility of guiding the English nation at this time of acute crisis. James had found kingship a difficult matter ; Charles was destined to find it impossible. He was amiable, but he was weak ; he was affectionate, but he had no discrimination. He had dignity, but he was faithless ; and, crowning misfortune in the character of a king, he had no sense of his personal responsibility towards the nation. The matter of ruling seemed to him quite simple. He was the king, and the people were his subjects ; he was to govern, they were to obey. The idea that the fate and happiness of both king and people hung together did not enter his mind. He utterly failed to grasp the principle that the welfare of the monarch depends upon his subjects, just as much as the welfare of the subjects is due to the wise government of the monarch. As a private citizen his life would have been blameless and happy. As a king, and thus by all natural laws the trusted protector of his subjects, his career can only be regarded as one long, pitiable mistake.

Difficulties met him from the outset. James had sown the seeds of suspicion and rebellion, and Charles found his first Parliament keenly jealous of their powers and privileges. They renewed the custom duties of Tonnage and Poundage for one year only, and refused to grant him the huge grant of money which he demanded for carrying out his foreign policy of enmity towards Spain. Charles declared himself indifferent towards the desires of the Commons and blindly pursued the war. Next year he was so short of money that he was obliged to call another Parliament. The members met in a defiant temper. They denied the king the right of collecting Tonnage and Poundage without their consent, and they repeated their axiom that supplies must be met with redress of grievance. In a rage the king dissolved the sitting, and hastened to levy a forced loan. This unconstitutional and despotic behaviour roused the bitterest anger. But it went deeper than that. It kindled a spark of exasperation, which soon grew into rebellion, under the king's steady opposition to their requests. Before long the reformers began to make definite schemes. Their ideas took the shape of a Bill, and when the third Parliament met in 1628, the Commons presented the famous Petition of Right.

This celebrated charter forbade the levying of taxes by the king; the imprisonment of anyone without legal cause; the billeting of soldiers on private houses; the use of martial law for civil offences. Both Houses passed the Bill with enthusiasm, and everyone was full of eagerness to hear the king's answer. As usual, Charles found himself utterly unable to give a proper reply. He sent back a long, evasive reply, but he would make no promises of any kind. Directly afterwards he showed his unconcern by collecting Tonnage and Poundage as usual. This retort was so deliberate, and so open, that

the Commons could no longer be blind to the fact that Charles had not the slightest intention of governing constitutionally unless it suited his own desires. The extreme difficulty of the situation was apparent to everyone, and every day made it worse. The king was bent on having his own way; the Commons were determined not to let slip the rights of the nation. Where harmony and co-operation should have been, there was discord and division. An onlooker must have seen something pathetic in the spectacle of a king setting up private interests instead of maintaining the public welfare. The Commons had been neither violent nor unreasonable in their requests. Some show of integrity, and a very little yielding, on the part of the sovereign, might easily have saved the situation, and the deplorable catastrophe of 1649 would have been averted.

After the friction of 1628 the breach between the sovereign and his ministers widened suddenly and considerably. The king was not without good intentions, but he had not learnt the art of government, and he was reckless from ignorance as much as from any other cause. The more haphazard he showed himself, the more determined grew the temper of the Commons. They openly denounced as enemies to the country both those who advised the levying of Tonnage and Poundage simply on the king's authority, and those who paid any such sum without public protest. This challenge roused Charles to fury, and he hastily ordered a dissolution. After this, Parliament did not meet again for eleven years.

Unhampered by the Commons, the sovereign now entered upon a long period of unconstitutional rule, aided by three odious and illegal courts—the Star Chamber, the Council of the North, and the Court of High Commission. With these three bodies to carry out his wishes, Charles managed to control the kingdom, raising what money he

needed by royal order ; by the sale of monopolies ; by ship money ; and by all sorts of fines and exactions. By these means he managed to keep his exchequer supplied, at the expense of losing the affection and respect of his people. The nation began to show their annoyance. They had welcomed Charles into a position of public trust ; and he had deliberately broken his part of the bargain. Discontent grew rapidly, and its expression became daily more and more open. Hampden's steady refusal to pay ship money in 1635 had an enormous effect on the country generally. This was one of the most hated of taxes, and it was well understood that its aim was only a blind. The money was collected on the ground that it was needed for the defence of the coasts. But the people knew perfectly well that it was intended to fill the king's general purse. Charles himself confessed as much, when he remarked that he meant it as " a spring and magazine that should have no bottom, and for an everlasting supply of all occasions."

This long season of irregular taxation brought the country to the point of open revolt, and it was difficult to prophesy which way matters would next turn, when affairs in Scotland suddenly became violent, and for the time attention was diverted to the northern kingdom. Charles had always been strongly suspicious of the doctrines of Puritanism, and the darling wish of his heart was to see Scotland and England following the same ritual. His ambition in this direction was heartily supported by Laud. In utter ignorance of the Scottish temper, Charles ventured in 1637 to introduce Laud's Liturgy into the Scottish Church. The action roused the fiercest anger and opposition. Men and women alike spurned the proposal as detestable. In their terror they lost all sense of proportion, and they declared wildly that " Baal was in

the Church." Charles failed to understand either the depth or the bitterness of their feeling, and with extraordinary obstinacy he insisted upon obedience. His shortsightedness brought its own result. The northern people did not mean to be lightly shuffled out of their religion. They drew up the National Covenant, and in March 1638 the whole people joined in signing a general declaration that they would "labour by all means lawful to recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel as it was established before recent innovations." A straw tells the way that the wind is blowing. A wise king would have withdrawn, for a time, at anyrate. But Charles set about gathering an army to enforce his will, and an encounter actually took place on Dunse Law, near Berwick, in which the Scots more than held their own.

In this dilemma the sovereign unwillingly made up his mind to summon the Commons, and in April 1640 the "Short" Parliament assembled.

Eleven years had gone by since the king and the Commons had met. Many things had happened in the meantime; many an unconstitutional act had been carried out under one of the three Councils acting for the king. It might have been supposed that after nursing their grievances for all these years, the Commons would have come together in an actively hostile spirit. On the contrary, they showed an almost eager desire to please the king, and even the partial Clarendon confesses in his *History* that "the House generally was exceedingly disposed to please the King and to do him service. . . . It could never be hoped that more sober or dispassionate men would ever meet together in that place, or fewer who brought ill purposes with them." All might have gone well, if the king had not made the fatal mistake of bargaining. He sent word he would give up ship money upon the

receipt of a sum amounting to nearly a million pounds. The Commons were willing to give the sum, but they were not willing to barter it for a right which they declared the sovereign had never possessed. They maintained that ship money had been illegal from the first, so that in this case the king had no right to sell it. If they agreed to buy it, they said they would be tacitly acknowledging that there *had* been a right on the king's part ; and this they swore there was not. Discussion arose, and the point was hotly debated. Presently the news was reported to Charles. The intelligence threw him into a passion, and without stopping to consider the wisdom of his conduct he hastily sent down word that Parliament was dissolved. The members were amazed and indignant. To be called together after eleven years, and then dismissed in this hasty fashion ! It was unbelievable. With burning hearts and angry words they left the House. The nation was no less aghast at the tidings than the Commons. After eleven years of tyranny they had at least hoped for redress of some of their grievances. Now, in a twinkling they saw their hopes dashed ; their fond fancies withered. Consternation reigned everywhere, except in the hearts of the more desperate, who declared that the time for half measures had gone by, since the king had forfeited all right to reverence or even consideration.

With dogged folly Charles shut his eyes to danger, and plunged into Scottish affairs. Here matters went from bad to worse, and he was soon thoroughly beaten. This made a compact of some kind a necessity. Even Charles saw this much, and so, very much against his will, he called together another Parliament in November 1640. Thus opened that most memorable of all Parliaments, known as the " Long," which clung grimly to its power, till its ruthless expulsion by Cromwell in 1653.

Energetic measures were promptly taken. The three great Councils were abolished ; Laud and Strafford were impeached ; all who had served the king in collecting illegal taxes were called to account ; judges were appointed for life, upon good behaviour ; and a Triennial Bill was passed. Charles saw it was not the moment for words, so he permitted the reforms ; though he had no intention of abiding by his promises a minute longer than was unavoidable. He gave way for a time ; but his spirit of obstinacy was thoroughly roused. He did not mean to give way for ever. Two years later he heard a rumour that the Commons meant to impeach Henrietta Maria. Without stopping to inquire into the report, he rashly decided on a counter-move, by himself impeaching five of the Commons, Pym, Hampden, Hazelrigge, Holles and Strode. The "five" failed to answer the summons, whereupon Charles suddenly appeared before Parliament with an armed guard of some hundreds, demanding that they should be given up. News of the king's action had been hinted at, and the five members had prudently withdrawn. The king went away foiled and angry. No more undignified position for a monarch could be imagined. The sovereign had stooped to challenge his ministers ; he had made personal and open attack upon five of his subjects ; and he had brought with him armed soldiers to make sure of carrying out his design. What that design may have been we can only surmise darkly, though it is difficult to believe with Macaulay, that Charles went "determined to carry out his unlawful design into effect by violence ; and if necessary to shed the blood of the chiefs of the Opposition on the very floor of the Parliament House."

News of the event flew over the land, and the nation stood alarmed and angry. War seemed the only possible

settlement. Both parties began to make preparations ; Charles set about raising soldiers, and he made more than one attempt to seize the powder magazines in the country. Contemporary Parliamentarians lay the blame of opening the war upon him. But contemporary reports are seldom impartial, and at the moment when either party was ready for the attack, one side was in this respect as guilty as the other. War followed, and the nation found itself struggling with the sore calamity of being divided among itself. Some were for the king ; some were for the Parliament. Everywhere was strife and preparation for action. Often enough the father was against his son ; the son against his father.

Either side had its victories and defeats, but by 1647 Charles found himself a prisoner, distracted and beaten. He had paltered with the Presbyterians ; he had intrigued with the Scots ; he had kept faith with no one. The army offered him terms. " Were I to accept these I should be a phantom king," he cried. The words were true ; it was all that the army felt could be safely offered him. Meanwhile he remained a prisoner, and in 1648 Cromwell quickly defeated the Scots who rose in his favour. The army was now in complete control of officers, and the more resolute resolved to wait no longer. A committee was held, and it was determined that Charles should be beheaded. The resolution was not formed without qualms. More than one agreed that a day might come when the deed would be held in horror. Among those with this view was Colonel Hutchinson. Yet in the end he voted for the execution, though he did so with the open acknowledgment that the act " might one day come to be again disputed among men." And so the grim council came to an end. The king's doom was already sealed, even though his trial had not yet taken place.

Colonel Hutchinson's words soon came true, and almost at once men were "disputing" over the deed. From that day to this the "disputing" has continued, and it will probably last for ever. It is not a light thing to take life from any being, most especially from a sovereign. But in excuse it must always be remembered that the times were extraordinary. Charles had over and over again shown that he cared nothing for faith, honour, or the welfare of his subjects. The men who had the daring to propose and carry out such a design were men of savagely austere temperament, but they were also most certainly men of sincerity. A weak character, such as Charles had had the misfortune to inherit, seemed all the more contemptible when exposed to the contrast of iron will; and in an age of reformers his selfishness took on the shade of criminality. His trial was only a form. With becoming dignity he refused to plead before judges who were not his equals in rank. He bore himself gravely and quietly, so that at the last he won to his side many who before this had lost all affection for him. After the sentence had been carried out, a sudden and natural change of feeling surged over the land. The people had killed their king, and for the moment the awfulness of the deed made them forget the long years of tyranny under which they had suffered. The horror of the moment out-did the horrors of the past. All those piled-up corpses on Marston Moor and Naseby; those mutilated victims of the Star Chamber; those hunted fugitives of the Court of High Commission, became as nothing before the great central fact that the king was dead, and that he had perished at the hand of his subjects.

After the Restoration, a Royal Proclamation made the 30th of January a solemn fast day for "the murder of the late King," and in his diary Pepys tells of a sermon he

heard on this occasion upon the subject of Divine vengeance. By his death Charles reached a height far above kingship. His faults were forgotten ; his excellences exaggerated. "Eikon Basilike" gave him a halo which all Milton's efforts could not dim, and with strange irony poets of the day heaped upon him the very adjectives he least deserved, hailing him as "great, good and just." His life ended amid scenes of touching pathos. But history pays little heed to sentiment. Charles had had a magnificent chance, and he had played fast and loose with it. Many tender and lovable little traits sparkle out in his character, but his weakness was his ruin. The times were difficult. None but the bravest, sincerest men could hope to grapple with them. Charles, with his half promises, and his double dealing, was not the king for a crisis. The sad and terrible tragedy of his death is a blot on English history and a calamity in our national records. But it is hardly to be laid to the charge of the ruthless few who tried him. Charles was his own executioner. For in a monarch it is required above all else that he be just, faithful, and true, not only in his private relationships, but also in his conduct towards the nation.

OLIVER CROMWELL

*" The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow."*

SHELLEY

IN the sleepy little town of Huntingdon, in the year 1599, a child was born to Robert and Elizabeth Cromwell. Years passed by and the boy grew from youth to manhood, unknown and unregarded by the outside world, to whom the name Oliver Cromwell as yet signified nothing. Robert Cromwell, the father, was a squire of some substance ; a man interested in the general affairs of life ; who had himself been in Parliament. The career of the son seemed likely to follow that of his parent, and in 1628 he found a place among the Commons. The dandies there soon noticed that the new-comer did not make a fine figure. His clothes were cut badly and hung loosely round him ; his linen was plain, and not very clean. But he bore the air of good breeding, and when he rose to speak he was so much in earnest that he soon drew the ears of everyone present. The Parliament, however, was short-lived, and the Petition of Right once passed, Oliver Cromwell, with the rest of the members, withdrew into the obscurity of private life. Nevertheless his fleeting experience of public affairs had done this much : it had given him an insight into the political machinery of the country. Besides this, it had strengthened in him that fine sense of justice, that sincere wish to give every man his due, which both friend

and foe acknowledged as his throughout his stormy career. Like Bunyan, as a young man, he was too much occupied in studying his own feelings. The more he brooded, the worse he imagined himself to be. Though there is every evidence that his early days were pure and honourable, he tortured himself with thoughts of odious vices which were never his. "You know," he declares in 1636 in a letter to a cousin, "you know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in and loved darkness and hated light. . . . This is true. I hated godliness, and yet God had mercy on me." The words have an affected ring in modern days, but the times were different then. People talked much more freely about the deep things of life. When Cromwell belittled himself, so far as he knew, he did it sincerely, and not to strike an effect. He was only in tune with his day—a day of real, and great effort. Puritanism was sweeping through the land like a scourging flame. Its lofty ideals, its mystic presentment of life, its hard conditions of fellowship, drew to it all those who were stirred with longings after goodness and purity. In its early, best sense, it stood for every sort of idealism; it raised life to a higher plane; it ennobled and strengthened the moral fibre of the nation as nothing else before or since. It did not imply a lessening of delight in life; but rather the purifying and deepening of all human affections. This was Puritanism in its first beginnings. It was a deep, intense national emotion after goodness, and against everything artificial,—“very great; very glorious, tragical enough to all thinking hearts that look on it from these days of ours.” It was the product of neither Presbyterianism nor any other sect. Its claims were as wide as the race, and Episcopalians as well as Presbyterians found in it an inspiration. But before long it fell from its high place. Fanaticism laid cold hands upon it, and its wide aims



Oliver Cromwell

Samuel Cooper

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

shrank at once. It became identified with narrowness ; with a mean view of the joyousness of life. It was tarnished by sectarianism and dissension, whereas it had been as the breath of God. Men of the noblest minds became so intense in their anxiety to follow their conscience, that they attempted to rule the world by the puny glimmer of their own individual opinion. They shunned innocent pleasures ; they feared to indulge in laughter ; they thought so long and so constantly about right and wrong, that life became a burden. And in obeying their duty to themselves, they quite lost sight of their duty to others. But these are not the real fundamentals of Puritanism. Under much dross and sham, the true gold can be found. Human nature struggles to righteousness along many a thorny road. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Puritanism was the thorny road, and over it toiled many earnest figures bent upon a crusade, genuine enough, if but little understood. Such was the spirit of the day when Oliver Cromwell shot suddenly into notice.

The beginning of the Civil War found him eager for action. He gave generously of his money, and he organised troops, under his control, on behalf of Parliament. He was a born soldier, and he could tell at a glance the worth of a new recruit. What he valued most was steadfast courage, and he ranked faithfulness far above more brilliant qualities. He chose his men neither for their birth nor their talents, but solely upon the ground of character. No recommendation weighed with him like the virtue of honesty. " Sir," he said to Major-General Cranford, " surely you are not well advised to turn off one so faithful to the Cause, and so able to serve you as this man is. . . . The State, in choosing men to serve it takes no notice of their opinions ; if they be willing faithfully to serve it—that satisfies." And another time he declared warmly

that he would far rather have "a plain russet-coated captain" wrapped up in his work than an officer of finer parts, but "a gentleman and nothing else."

Cromwell's great moment came in 1644 at Marston Moor, when his Ironsides turned the day against Prince Rupert, and at a blow killed the Royalist cause in the north. By this victory he became at once the most powerful general in the field. So far he had been grouped in the public imagination among Fairfax and the other Round-head leaders. Marston Moor made it plain that he was more than an ordinary general; he was a man of genius. His enemies watched him keenly, expecting perhaps that victory would make him lax. The simplicity of his nature, and his love of soldiery, saved him from this catastrophe. Instead of becoming careless, he grew sterner. Strict before, he was now verged upon severity, and he drilled his soldiers with the skill and harshness of a martinet. But he never lost sight of the fact that though he was a general he was also a soldier. He identified himself with his men, and wrote naturally and simply of "us soldiers."

To the end of the war his fame flourished. He was a magnificent general in the field, and his courage and brilliant leadership won him the admiration of everyone. But personally he showed to less advantage in the councils of peace. And when the fall of Charles placed power in the hands of the army, faults in his character, hidden by the stress of action, became glaringly visible. He had a genius for managing soldiers, but he was not tactful enough to thread his way through the intricacies of civil government without causing friction. Yet he ruled with superb courage, caring nothing for the personal feeling of the nation, conscious only that he was unravelling a problem that no one else could handle. He was determined to

reach the settlement he judged best for England, even at the expense of cruelty. His practical qualities as a soldier made it difficult for him to weigh up side issues. He imagined that a crisis, which had made the whole country rock, could be easily and successfully settled by simply removing the chief figure in the disturbance. He dwelt in the present rather than the future ; and though his sound common-sense made him see that the matter was one of fearful importance, he could not see beyond the moment, nor reckon up in advance the reaction that was sure to follow. He honestly and sincerely wanted to govern in the way that would further the general good of the nation. He did not grasp the fact that perhaps the public, for whom he was labouring, might resent his good offices, and of themselves upset the very plans he had made for their welfare. He seemed rather to imagine that once the figure of Charles were removed, the country would be reduced to quietness ; that the whole event would fade away and be forgotten, and peace and prosperity follow as a natural result. In the strength of this false hope he signed the warrant for the king's execution ; and though he was a man of deep and tender feeling, in the excitement of the moment he forgot himself so far as to sport with colleagues, drawn together for the grim purpose of signing away the life of a sovereign.

Charles was beheaded, and the real power in the government fell at once into the hands of Cromwell. He accepted the position with the readiness of one who knows that he is fit for the work. He made no foolish excuses of inability. The government of England at such a crisis was a terrible and stupendous task. But he undertook it in the spirit which filled Pitt, who exclaimed at the time of another crisis, nearly one hundred years later : " I can save the country, and I am sure that no one else can."

Cromwell knew enough of the times to be aware that he alone stood between the nation and anarchy. To pretend that another was more qualified for the post would have been folly, and he understood this thoroughly. Some of his disappointed followers afterwards asserted that it was partly "ambition" that led him to "usurp the place." Be this as it may, it was well for England that he took the post, from whatever motive. The peace of the nation depended upon him and him alone. Had he been less firm, less sure of himself, the country would soon have been drenched in anarchy. The army and the people were still suspicious of each other. Cromwell stood between them, a firm, defiant, courageous figure, and gradually either side grew more composed. With every enticement to advance his own interests, he showed himself wonderfully simple and straightforward. "For myself," he said, "I desire not to keep my place in this Government an hour longer than I may preserve England in its just rights, and may protect the People of God in such a just liberty of conscience as I have already mentioned. . . . I undertook this Government in the simplicity of my heart, and as before God, and to do the part of an honest man to the interest . . . so I can say that no particular interest, either of myself, estate, honour or family, are, or have been prevalent with me to this undertaking."

These words were spoken before the First Protectorate Parliament of 1654, when he was reviewing the months since the Commons had first been summoned. They are a good example of the simple directness of speech which he always used. "I did think also, for myself," he went on to say, "I am like to meet with difficulties." Difficulties! When the nation was already seething in a flood of remorse; when Charles was being spoken of with awe, as a saint and a martyr; when even among the closest of

Cromwell's supporters there were some who talked darkly of "ambition" and "usurpation." Difficulties! — the mildest term that a man might use about the simplest reform. Say rather impossibilities, strenuous and terrible opposition, war to the death. But Cromwell had swept his eye over the land, and summed up the position, and now he declared serenely he was like to meet with difficulties.

He treated Parliament as he dealt with the army. In 1653 he dissolved the "Rump" in disgust, because he saw that the members were grasping at unlimited power. Immediately after, he called together a Convention (known as the "Little" or "Barebones" Parliament). Each member of this had been named by himself, under the title of "Oliver Cromwell, Captain General and Commander-in-Chief of the Armies and Forces raised, and to be raised within this Commonwealth." In the last phrase of this summons lurks the hint of the Protector's ambition. Not only was he general of the present forces, but he was to be general of all succeeding armies. Further, he claimed the right not only to govern in his lifetime, but to name his successor. Like Elizabeth, he could not bear to think of the power which he had laboured to establish being shaken or invaded. He desired to keep a ghostly finger on the pulse of the nation, even after his withdrawal from the scene.

The "Little" Parliament met, only to dissolve of its own accord, after some five months' work. The men who composed it were persons of intense character, who rushed forward with all sorts of suggestions for sweeping changes. They were alive with the spirit of reform, and so eager about righting wrongs that they forgot that the moment was scarcely suitable; or that the rest of the nation would perhaps not agree to their plans. What was wrong, was to be made better at once. They even ventured

to discuss doing away altogether with the Court of Chancery, since already more than two thousand of its petitions remained unexamined, reducing the Court to a laughing stock. But the reformers were divided among themselves; debates arose upon the power to dismiss clerics who did not bear good characters. After ten days' discussion, the point was still unsettled. Suddenly the eager little knot of men became aware of the hopelessness of their undertaking. The world could not be set straight in a week. They hastily resolved upon dissolution, upon the ground "that the sitting of this Parliament any longer, as now constituted, will not be for the good of the Commonwealth." After which, "the House rose; and the Speaker, with many of the Members of the House, departed."

This sudden event was followed by a notice calling together the First Protectorate Parliament. It met in 1654, members from Ireland and Scotland for the first time sitting side by side with English representatives.

Before its coming thither Cromwell had secured his authority by an arbitrary and daring act. He called the members to him in the Painted Chamber at Westminster. Here, after a long speech, in which he set out the events which had led up to his government, he declared that a Parliament such as theirs, chosen according to the terms of the Instrument of Government, ought to make "some owning of the Call and of the Authority" which brought them hither, and that such acknowledgment would be required before they entered the House. "I have caused," he remarked, calmly and intently, "a stop to be put to your entrance into the Parliament House till such Assurance be given." A dead silence followed the announcement of this high-handed and illegal proceeding. Then a babble of discussion broke out, and after a pause the members passed on to examine the document

awaiting their signatures. One by one they scanned the words : " I do hereby freely promise and engage myself to be true and faithful to the Lord Protector and the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland ; and shall not . . . propose, or give my consent to alter the Government as it is settled in a single Person and a Parliament." Some, on reading, took up the pen and wrote willingly, even gleefully ; others who at first hesitated to write, in the end made a hurried signature ; the rest, a hundred in all, turned away, refusing to subscribe, at least without further discussion among themselves. After thinking it over, most of them realised it was wisest to sign. So that in the end, all except one or two put their names to the document. It was plain that the times called for strong and prompt control ; that the nation needed sorely a ruler with genius to command and enough strength of character to insist upon getting his way. Even the most jealous granted Cromwell's fitness for the office, and from a sense of necessity they yielded. Their submission set the seal upon his triumph. He was now in complete control. He was head of the army ; master over the Parliament ; and official governor of the nation.

His Parliament of 1654 gave him small satisfaction. The members were for reforming the Constitution. Cromwell was firmly convinced that the only hope of lasting peace for the nation lay in allowing time for affairs to settle down quietly. The " Instrument of Government," upon which the new rule was based, had hardly had time to be established. It was foolish to endanger it by fresh and perhaps ill-advised plans. Nothing could be more disastrous to the Parliamentary cause than any new readjustment. For even at this early date, discontents and murmurings were making themselves heard among the nation ; the Instrument of Government must at all

costs be preserved. Such was Cromwell's policy, and he made up his mind that nothing should tempt him to let it slide. In upholding it he showed all the obstinacy of the Stewarts, but with this large difference. That whereas the determination of James and Charles had been the outcome of personal desire, bolstered up by self-will, and founded upon weakness, Cromwell's doggedness sprang from personal desire, coupled with a sense that his own wishes and the needs of the nation were at the moment one and the same. He had risen to his eminence through the sword, but he honestly desired to be the "Protector" of the people. He showed himself generous and broadminded towards all shades of opinions; he never stooped to the baser sorts of indulgence common to sudden conquerors. "It is his special glory," says Professor Tout, "that among the great military despots of the world called to power by a military revolution, he has the best claim to be considered an honest man."

He worked like a galley slave, but his aims were always those of a statesman. It was natural to him to command, and he did so with imperial greatness. "I will take my own resolutions," he once observed in private. It was the same in his public dealings. He relied almost entirely upon his own judgment. If he had been less great a man, such conduct would have roused an opposition too strong for him to overcome; but in the critical state of affairs it was the only possible safeguard for the nation.

A few months had passed since the First Protectorate Parliament had met, and the members were still busy over small and unimportant points. Cromwell's impatience grew daily greater. Disaffection was spreading. What time was it for the discussing of niceties of government, when the State itself was threatened? In a condition of extreme

annoyance he went down to address the members. "I do not know what you have been doing," he cried. "I do not know whether you have been alive or dead. I have not once heard from you all this time ; I have not ; and that you all know. . . . Judge you whether the contesting for things that were provided for by this Government hath been profitable expense of time. . . . You have wholly elapsed your time and done just nothing !"

The Commons sat silent and uneasy under the lash of his tongue, waiting for the final explosion. At last it came. "I think it my duty," cried the Protector, "to tell you that it is not for the profit of these Nations, nor for common and public good, for you to continue here any longer. And therefore I do declare unto you that I do dissolve this Parliament."

From 1654 to 1656 Cromwell ruled without a Parliament. Order throughout the country was kept up by means of major-generals, each set over some piece of the country, with power to exercise martial law. These officials excited great anger and bitterness. They reminded the people too strongly of the time when the army had had the upper hand, and their short, rough way of dealing with culprits was hotly resented. "Silly mean fellows," says Mrs Hutchinson, "who . . . ruled according to their wills, by no law but what seemed good in their own eyes."

A Second Parliament met in 1656, when the Humble Petition and Advice reaffirmed Cromwell's authority. He was made Protector for life ; allowed the power of naming his successor ; and promised a large yearly revenue. His power was at its height, and he put on some of the ceremony of kings. But though fineries might distract him for the minute, his aims were too wide for him to be dazzled for long by mere show. At heart he was still the

plain, practical soldier, with an instinct for government, and a passion for duty.

In foreign affairs his genius shone at its highest. The Dutch concluded an alliance with England ; Spain and France began to woo her friendship. The credit of the country abroad had sunk into nothing under the first two Stewarts, but Cromwell's brilliant statesmanship soon made a vast difference here. Victory after victory made England's name famous on the Continent. Blake's victories at sea were strengthened by triumphs on land, won by England and France allied against Spain. Before Cromwell died he had the proud satisfaction of seeing England recognised abroad as a country of renown and importance, instead of being treated with the contempt that had been her portion since the death of Elizabeth. In the midst of busy and harassing schemes for still greater efforts on the Continent, Cromwell was struck down by a severe illness. He struggled fiercely to throw it off ; for he had lived with zest, and was unwilling to die. But this time it was a losing battle that he fought, and he died on the 3rd of September 1658. The influence of his strong spirit, even after death, was so vital that it was some time before the nation fully realised that his life had ended. Richard Cromwell succeeded as quietly as if he had been the heir of a king. But his attempt at government, short as it was, made it very plain that Cromwell had only held his position by his genius : that none lesser than a Cromwell could hope to hold the nation in check. Quietly and naturally the country went back to the old order of things. Though it might seem to a careless onlooker that affairs were just as they had been before the Protectorate, they were really very different. If Cromwell's power had been fleeting, it had nevertheless held imperishable qualities, which had been absorbed by the country.

There was a very real and permanent change in the people. It was less than two hundred years since the great Elizabeth had passed away. But in that short time the nation had suffered a complete transformation, and in two generations the race had altered enormously. On nearly every point public opinion had changed. The Civil War had caused the terrible death of a king; but it also caused the birth of the nation as a body of thinking men.

Cromwell was buried in Westminster Abbey with magnificent state, though not with general approval. Evelyn notes curtly in his diary: "September 3rd died that arch rebell, called Protector." There were many who shared the opinion, and as soon as Cromwell was dead, criticism that had so far skulked past in a cloak, now showed a bare face. He who had been so extolled became bitterly reviled. Two years later his body was torn from its grave and exposed to every sort of ignominy. Five years went by, and again public opinion swung back so far that Pepys, writing in his diary, observed: "It is strange how everybody do nowadays reflect upon Oliver, and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him, while here a prince [Charles II.], come in with all the love and prayers and good liking of his people, who have given greater signs of loyalty and willingness to serve him with their estates than ever was done by any people, hath lost all so soon, that it is a miracle what way a man could devise to lose so much in so little time."

Unhappy Stewarts! So beloved, so revered; so contemned, so despised! So unfitted for those stormy times, in which the mighty figure of Oliver Cromwell found its natural setting.

CHARLES II

*“Pleasures are like the poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or, like the snowfall in the river,
A moment white, then melts for ever.”*

BURNS

THE short interim in which Richard Cromwell tried to hold the reins of government came to a sudden and inglorious end, and with infinite relief the son of the great Protector returned to the back-water of private life. His withdrawal showed that the army had again triumphed, and the nation trembled at the thought of what the next move might be. But within the ranks dissatisfaction already ran high, and Lambert's efforts at playing the part of a second Cromwell only ended in desertion and imprisonment. From Scotland, Monck was watching affairs with a calm, steady gaze. There were many guesses as to what he would do. But no one knew his intentions for a certainty. Then suddenly and silently, on 2nd January 1660, he moved towards the capital. A whisper ran round that he intended to announce a free Parliament, and all along the route citizens were frantic in their efforts to show delight. The general kept his intentions to himself, fearing lest discussion should spoil his plan; and no one dared ask him questions. A soldier's duty was to obey orders, not to take part in the councils of his chiefs. So the troops moved onwards, a silent, well-ordered body, and none of those who watched them go by, could say what their real purpose might be. Nevertheless



Charles II

John Greenhill

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

hope ran high. In London bonfires were lighted and bells rung, and at night the streets were filled with men and women jostling one another in anxiety to share in the general excitement. "At Strand Bridge," says Pepys, "I could at one time tell thirty one fires ; and all along burning and roasting and drinking for rumps. There being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The butchers at the May Pole in the Strand rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump. On Ludgate Hill there was one turning of the spit that had a rump tied upon it, and another basting of it. Indeed it was past imagination, both the greatness and the suddenness of it. At one end of the street you would fain think there was a whole lane on fire, and so hot that we were fain to keep on the further side." Monck's next step was to restore the Parliament of 1648. The "Rump," turned out by Cromwell, had of their own accord reassembled. To their amazement the excluded members arrived and entered without let or hindrance. Troops of soldiers guarded the entrance, set there, as perhaps the "Rump" had imagined, to keep out the very men now filing into their places ! Among the people the note of rejoicing rose higher than ever. Pepys was about, observing everything; tasting each emotion in the air. "It was," he says, "a most pleasant sight to see the City from one end to the other with a glory about it, so high was the light of the bonfires." The delirium of the moment seemed to turn the heads of the nation. All sorts of extravagant hopes were current, and men talked with glib complacency about a golden age. The king was the "Pleasant May Flower" whose coming would make all England blossom anew ; and among the dozens of ballads launched at the moment there were none that erred on the side of expecting too little. He began to be regarded as a sort of demigod, and

he was talked of as if his arrival would instantly furnish a magic remedy for all the ills under which the nation groaned.

Charles was fully alive to the feeling of the moment, and from France he issued a Declaration in which he promised a general pardon, full satisfaction to the army, and liberty of conscience to the nation. The "Rump," outvoted by the moderate party, was dissolved. A Convention Parliament took its place, and Charles was enthusiastically invited to take up his inheritance. He lost no time in responding to the summons, and in the month of May, 1660, he entered London, amid scenes of rejoicing which rivalled those on the day of Elizabeth's coronation. He entered from the Southwark side, and so on to London Bridge.

*" King Charles he now is landed to ease his subjects' moan,
Those he faithful handed he takes them for his own.
Oh, he is our Royal Sovereign King, and he is of the Regallist
offspring,
Peace and plenty with him he'll bring, and will set us free
From all vexations and great taxations,
Woe and misery ;
And govern all these nations with great tranquillity."*²¹

His progress was one long, gorgeous pageant. All along the way he found " the windows and streets exceedingly thronged with people to behold him, and the walls adorned with hangings and carpets of tapestry and other costly stuff ; and in many places sets of loud music ; all the conduits as he passed running claret ; and the several companies in the liveries as also the trained bands of the city . . . welcoming him with loyal acclamations."

The slow progress of the procession was very unlike the impatient entry made by James I. The king was as affable as James had been surly. Smiles were every-

where, and halts were many. Evelyn has left a picture of the gorgeousness of the scene in which "Lords and Nobles, clad in cloth of silver, gold, and velvet" tripped over one another in their eagerness to catch a glimpse of the "May-flower" king. Every house was crowded to the doorway. The "windowes and balconies," says Evelyn, "were well set with ladies; trumpets, music, and myriads of people flocking, even so far as from Rochester, so as they were seven houres in passing the Citty, even from 2 in the afternoone till 9 at night." Pepys was among the throng, looking on with quick, observant eyes, noting the grandeur of Lord So-and-So's coat, spying out Sir Somebody's private indulgence in tippling, or commenting upon the careless behaviour of My Lady Great Riches. "After all this," he declares, "I can say, that, besides the pleasure of the sight of these glorious things, I may now shut my eyes against any other objects, nor for the future trouble myself to see things of state and showe, as being sure never to see the like again in this world." Among all this enthusiasm there was only one discordant note: the army alone refused to join in the general delight. From Blackheath the soldiers looked on, doubtful and uneasy, suspicious of any king boasting the name of "Stewart."

In such a manner did Charles II. come into his own. His recall expressed the desire of the entire nation for peace and a settled government. It did not by any means indicate that the people were now ready to embrace that theory of Divine Right which had been one of the chief causes of the Civil War. It was merely a declaration that they meant to hold by the Constitution as it had been settled by the Long Parliament in 1640, and that they regarded the king as the traditional and natural upholder of their national rights and liberties. Charles had

no desire to play the tyrant. But supposing he had ventured to show any inclination of the kind, he would very soon have found that he had to fight against a nation fully awake to its power of limiting the prerogative of any sovereign, daring to remove a tittle from the laws of the land.

The new king was just thirty when his reign began. He had gone through extraordinary experiences. He had travelled in disguise, on foot and alone ; he had been so weary he knew not how to drag one foot after the other through the mud ; he had been so hungry that he had been " fain to eat a piece of bread and cheese out of a poor body's pocket." The tragical fate of his father was in itself a great and overwhelming reminder of the lengths to which a distracted nation might go. It seemed natural to expect that such a stormy upbringing would have made him harsh and serious ; a just, severe ruler, quick at understanding the needs of his people, and slow in matters of self-indulgence. But on the contrary he seemed like a man who had never known a care. He was seldom serious, and never self-restrained. He came back determined " never to set out on his travels again," but he was no statesman. He had no desire to govern his people, and he cared very little for the political importance of the country. The hot temper of the times into which he had been born, seemed to have resulted in creating in him a spirit which was little touched by any emotion. Nearly everything left him cold ; he neither loved nor hated with any intensity. His cynical attitude almost appeared like affectation : in reality it was the lukewarm temper of a man in love with the principle of letting things remain as they are. He gave liberally and often, but without sifting the inquiries of those who begged favours. The most persistent suitor won the day ; for his indolent nature made it hard for him to say " no." This dislike of grappling

with things was a fatal weakness in his administration. Gradually it awakened the contempt of his ministers, and they took very little pains to hide their impatience with a monarch, who could end a debate upon a serious matter of bribery by "saying lazily : 'Why,' says he, 'after all this discourse I now come to understand it ; and that is, that there can nothing be done in this more than is possible, and I would have these gentlemen do as much as possible to hasten the Treasurer's accounts and that is all,' which," adds Pepys scornfully, "was so silly as I never heard."

The Convention Parliament was dissolved in the end of 1660, and early in the next year a new House met, the spirit of which was strongly hostile to the Puritans. Some called for sudden and severe vengeance upon the rebels ; and nearly all were loud in demanding that the severest laws should be passed against heresy. Charles was in a difficult position. He had been recalled by the Presbyterians no less than by the Cavaliers. Under a promise of good faith the army had quietly disbanded. By the Declaration of Breda he had proclaimed pardon to all save the regicides. He could not honourably agree to the cries for further punishment. Personally he was opposed to the general spirit of Puritanism. The memories of his sojourn in Scotland, lingered in his mind as those of a time when he had been the bored guest of a host zealous over matters about which he himself cared nothing. He hated the fanaticism which made the eating of mince pies a vice, or a game round a maypole a sin. He despised the mistaken zeal which shunned beauty, and turned talking into a whine. He saw all the littleness of the movement, and none of its greatness. He was quick to note foibles and absurdities, but he had not the depth of character either to discover or to estimate the worth of a spirit bent upon self-denial. He knew that many a man

had made use of the cloak of religion to conceal villainies, and he carelessly concluded that this must be the way with most of its followers. He never set any value upon high virtues, such as honesty, purity, integrity; for he did not believe they existed. In his eyes every generous deed was done for a purpose, and every good word had its hidden meaning. No wonder he failed to understand a spirit, which in spite of much fanaticism and not a little absurdity, was a splendid and genuine endeavour after truth.

But if Charles had no spiritual strain in his character, he was free from the cruelty of a persecutor, and the sharp measures suggested by the Cavalier Parliament of 1661 drew from him a murmur of dissent. For now that the Royalists had once more got the upper hand they were quite ready to revenge themselves upon their old opponents. Fashionable dandies turned their wits upon them; frivolous women made merry at their expense. They were the sport of every ballad-monger, and many a Court gallant must have heard and laughed over a popular song, sung at every street corner to the indignation of any chance passer-by who happened to think differently:

*“ Fanatick Roundheads must go home agen,
And humbly walk afoot to plow;
Nor domineer thus over honest men,
But work to get their livings now;
Or if their minds be not inclined
To leave their former knavery,
A halter shall dispatch them all,
And then the Gallows shall be made,
The highest preferment of their trade,
A joyfull sight to see.”*

Charles made his protest, but the tide in the House was too strong for him, and in 1662 the Act of Uniformity was

passed. This Act had a sudden and important influence. Nearly two thousand ministers chose to give up their livings rather than agree to its conditions, and as a result sectarians of all sorts, hitherto bitter and disunited, were joined in one strong body. Great discontent broke out at this early breach of faith of the conditions of the Treaty of Breda. "The Act of Uniformity," says Pepys, "is lately printed, which, it is thought will make mad work among the Presbyterians. People of all sides are much discontented."

For the most part the ejected ministers behaved quietly and with dignity. The ever-ready Pepys resolved to go to St Dunstan's Church to hear the farewell sermon of Dr Bates, thinking no doubt he would hear plain speaking against the Government. But the sermon turned upon the "God of Peace," and it was neither bitter nor fault-finding. Just at the end there was one reference to the moment. "I do believe," said the speaker, "that many of you do expect that I should say something to you in reference to the time, this being the last time that possibly I may appear here. It is not my manner to speak anything in the pulpit that is extraneous to my text and business, yet though I shall say that it is not my opinion, fashion, nor humour, that keeps me from complying with what is required of us, but something after much prayer, discourse, and study yet remains unsatisfied and commands me herein." And so the sermon closed. The behaviour of most of the ejected ministers was marked by the same honourable and dignified conduct, with the result that they took with them into exile the affections and devotion of a large part of the nation. Clarendon's influence soon brought about even sterner regulations. Very severe laws, rapidly passed in the following years, made "Conventicle" meetings unlawful; and forbade all clergy turned

out by the Act of Uniformity, to teach or go within five miles of a town or place where they had held a charge. Cut off from the profession of teaching, the unfortunate men had hard work to make a living, and often enough they wandered miserably from coffee-house to coffee-house, where the baser sorts among them talked about their grievances, and snatched unworthily at the doles of sympathetic listeners. Within the ranks of every nation can always be found a smaller or larger body of discontented citizens ; but the result of the policy of " Clarendon's Code " was largely to increase the number of such malcontents, by giving them some solid reason for complaint. Charles himself, with his easy notions about religion and morals, could not be expected to understand how vital the question of " uniformity " might be in the eyes of some of his subjects, and no doubt he never realised the depth of the suffering inflicted by the new laws. Personal feeling made him prefer the Roman Catholic belief. But he was equally far from the temper of either the bigot or the mystic ; and he heard with complacency the ridiculous doctrine put forward by the philosopher Hobbes, to the effect that the will of the prince was " the standard of right and wrong, and that every subject ought to be ready to profess Popery, Mahometanism or Paganism, at the royal command." Such a dangerous theory was not without its effect upon the nation ; and the frivolity and immorality which were fashionable at Court were soon copied in the country districts. No amount of money was enough for the wants of a king surrounded by shameless and greedy courtiers ; and funds that ought to have been spent in public affairs made only a drop in the sycophants' bucket. Street ballad after street ballad told of the gross indulgence of the times. The earnest temper, which had been general among the nation from the reign of Henry VIII. onward,

seemed giving way to baser qualities of flippancy and self-seeking. The "Careless Gallant," published in 1675, reflects pretty well the fashionable life of the latter years of the reign of Charles :

*"Let us drink and be merry, dance, joke and rejoice,
With Claret, and Sherry, Theorbo and voice,
The changeable world to our joy is unjust,
All treasure's uncertain ; then down with your dust,
In frolics depose your pounds, shillings and pence,
For we shall be nothing a hundred years hence."*

Meanwhile the Commons looked on in despair, hoping against hope that the king would "retrench in a little time." But matters went from bad to worse in a Court where every man was out for what he could gain. Wren, meeting Pepys in the street, spoke bitterly of the corruption of the Court, "where a man cannot get suitably without breach of his honour." The truth of his complaint was borne out by another, who deplored that "the King and Court were never in the world so bad as they are now for gaming, swearing, drinking, and the most abominable vices that ever were in the world." Such an example in high places gravely influenced for evil the general moral life of the country.

In foreign politics Charles went upon the plan of supporting France and opposing Spain ; "although," exclaimed Pepys, "we do all naturally love the Spanish and hate the French." He had no great desire to meddle in the matters of other countries, and he treated foreign affairs with the same easy carelessness that he showed in his home government. But his friendship with Louis XIV. was looked upon with suspicion by his subjects, and his ministers noted with anxiety that the power of the French sovereign was steadily growing. The prompt and diplomatic action

of Sir William Temple in completing the Triple Alliance in 1668 relieved the strain which the greedy schemes of Louis had roused. England, Sweden and Holland joined together in friendship; the plans of France were for the time checkmated, and Louis was forced to sign the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The whole English nation rejoiced at the news. England had recovered her position on the Continent; France had been outwitted. But the delight of the people rested upon a false foundation, for already the English king was undermining the Treaty by dishonourable dealings. Two years later the underhand bargain was completed, and Charles put his name to the Secret Treaty of Dover (1670). By this deed he was placed in the contemptible position of outwardly keeping faith with his subjects in upholding the Triple Alliance, while in reality he was hand in glove with Louis XIV., and actually preparing to make war upon the Low Countries. Only one or two of the worst of his ministers knew of the treacherous compact. For the business had been carried out chiefly through Princess Henrietta of Orleans, sister-in-law to Louis, and famous at both Courts for her beauty and her brilliant wit. Immediately upon the conclusion of the Treaty, she died in circumstances not altogether free from suspicion.

The attack upon Holland was opened suddenly by both England and France at once. Charles had got the money he needed for the enterprise by dissolving Parliament and stopping payment to the goldsmiths, who had regular dealings with the Government. This act threw commerce into great confusion, for the goldsmiths could not carry on business, and many men were quite ruined. The reputation of the Exchequer was gone, and yet Charles reaped no benefit. "For," says Evelyn, "it did not supply the expense of the war, but melted away, I know not how."

Before long, rumours about the Dover Treaty got afloat. Public suspicion was roused, and the people, who detested Popery as hotly as they hated Puritanism, flew into a fever of alarm. At this inauspicious moment Charles publicly declared an "Indulgence" towards all dissenters. The more excited section of the people looked upon the words as a blind to permit favour towards Roman Catholics, and Parliament promptly passed the Test Act 1673, shutting out from office all who would not deny the doctrine of Transubstantiation. This brought the Duke of York into the open as an avowed member of the Church of Rome. Public opinion rose strongly against him, and in 1678 a new event added fuel to the nation's alarm. It was believed there was a huge Popish Plot on foot, and Titus Oates, the informer, was the popular hero of the moment. Public affairs were in every man's mouth, and in the streets men chanted the latest song :

*" Good People, I pray, give ear unto me,
A story so strange you have never been told,
How the Jesuit, Devil and Pope did agree
Our State to destroy, and Religion so old :
To murder our King
A most horrible thing.*

*The truth of my story if any man doubt
W'have witnesses ready to swear it all out."*

Hard upon this tumult the Habeas Corpus Act was passed (1679), reaffirming the liberties of the subject. Directly afterwards, the Exclusion Bill proposed to shut out the Duke of York from the succession. Politicians became bitterly divided. Charles was quite unable to contend with the struggle, so he contented himself with taking up the position of a looker-on, and waiting till the tide should turn. His own interest had, as usual, the first place in his

thoughts; and neither the succession nor any other equally important issue could shake him from his resolve of so conducting himself that he "would never again set out on his travels."

Titus Oates reached the height of notoriety, and then fell as suddenly as he had risen. His Majesty let the Commons know that he had been highly displeased by the disorderly and riotous behaviour of the election of 1681. They made no apology, but repeated their demand for the Exclusion Bill. Charles offered every other favour but this. The Commons refused to hear him, and in retort the king declared them dissolved. For once the nation was in sympathy with the king, and they praised him for a deed which, they declared, showed "natural feeling." The Whig party fell into discredit. The Rye House Plot (1683), which aimed at the assassination of both Charles and his brother, put the finishing touch to their misfortunes, and the Court party rode into power on the waves of popular enthusiasm. The Duke of York reappeared in English streets, and before long he ventured to take part again in public affairs. But though apparently matters were settled, there was a good deal of dissatisfaction beneath the surface. Soon the Duke pressed for public acknowledgment of his claims. Halifax urged the king to consult with the Commons; Rochester clamoured for still further repudiation of the Exclusion Bill. To his despair, Charles found himself in the position he most detested. He was called upon to decide between several parties, and the trend of his character and the whole habit of his life made him abhor the responsibility. He hesitated and considered, considered and hesitated. He promised everybody satisfaction, but he did not give a definite answer to any single individual. One minute he said he would summon the Commons; the next he

declared that nobody should persuade him to do anything of the kind. He promised to uphold the Duke of York; he declared he had the best of good-will towards Rochester; he vowed he would stand by Halifax. But in the midst of all these assertions he did nothing. Then suddenly death came upon him, and he died after an illness of two or three days. His end came as a shock to the nation, for he had a splendid physique and was unaccustomed to illness. All sorts of suspicions began to be noised abroad; it was confidently asserted that he had been poisoned. Some laid the guilt at the door of the queen; others blamed one of the physicians in attendance. These wild and unfounded assertions speedily found their way into the current catch-songs, notably in the "Swearers Chorus":

*"There was a monstrous Doctor.
This Doctor had no peer,
A Rogue from his cradle,
And bred to lie and swear,
And a-Swearing we will go, will go, will go,
A-Swearing we will go."*

The terrible suddenness of the event roused Evelyn to one of his rare moments of eloquence. "I can never forget," he writes, "the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness . . . which, this very se'n night, I was witness of, the King sitting and toying with his Mistresses . . . a French boy singing love-songs in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the greate courtiers and other dissolute persons were at Basset round a large table, a bank of at least £2,000 in gold before them. . . . Six days after was all in the dust."

A man of many parts, Charles wasted his life in vain

and easy living. His keen sense of self-preservation kept him from being forced into open contest with the Commons, so that he never attempted to rule either as a despot or as a tyrant. But his personal character debased him in the eyes of his people. He had unique opportunities for making his name glorious in history, in that he came to the throne at the call of an eager nation. But his self-indulgence was at once his fetish and his doom. It may be said, with Evelyn, that "he was a Prince of many virtues, and many great imperfections." A scrutiny of his character leaves as its chief impression that here was a man who, for the sake of his passions, abandoned the heritage he ought to have made splendid among the records of the nation.

JAMES II

*" If you trap the moment before it is ripe,
The tears of repentance you'll certainly wipe,
But, if once you let the ripe moment go,
You can never wipe off the tears of woe."*

BLAKE

JAMES, DUKE OF YORK, succeeded to his brother's crown so quietly that it might have been imagined there had never been either Test Act or Exclusion Bill. This was due partly to the suddenness of the death of Charles, and partly to the fact that James was on the spot at the moment. He lost no time in hastening from the death chamber of his brother to the chief Ministers of State, to whom he at once declared his intention of ruling the people in clemency and righteousness. He complained he had been misrepresented as aiming at undue power, and he vowed he would "endeavour to maintain the Government, both in Church and State, as by Law established . . . and that he would never depart from the just rights and prerogatives of the Crown." These promises lessened the suspicions of the lords, and they resolved that the new king should be instantly proclaimed. This was at once done, and before the nation at large was fully alive to the fact that Charles was no more, the heralds had solemnly announced the accession of the Duke of York.

The new monarch was above fifty years of age. Any traits of character were long since fixed and unalterable. The persecution of which he had been an object had soured

his already bitter disposition, and sharpened the edge of his natural cruelty. He could look unmoved on the agony of others, and seemed even to take a spiteful pleasure in suggesting new and subtle torments. After the battle of Sedgemoor, his near kinsman, the Duke of Monmouth—hunted, beaten, desperate—was brought before him. Bound and wild-eyed the rebel faced his inflexible sovereign. He had been sentenced, justly enough, to pay for his insurrection with his head. James had not the smallest intention of softening the sentence. Yet with refined malice he called his unhappy nephew to him, so that he might listen to his undignified prayers for life at any price. Then, when the prisoner had thoroughly exhausted and lowered himself, the king dismissed him coolly and in silence. Such was the sovereign who now stepped into the place of the affable Charles.

The Court party welcomed the accession of the new monarch with extravagant joy. But the selfish temper of the sovereign soon made itself felt, and many who had taken gifts from Charles found the day of their harvest ended. James was free from the worst of the voluptuous vices which had ruined the easy-going Charles, and his influence at once raised the moral standard among his officials. He was openly and passionately attached to his religion, though he made the most solemn promises that he would allow all men to worship as they pleased. But experience had taught the nation to put little trust in the word of a Stewart, and they hesitated to believe any tale of tolerance. Their doubts were before long justified, and the country was horrified by news of the unspeakable cruelty shown to the Covenanters. The stern, dogged temper of the Scot held its own, even in the face of mutilation and death. Martyrdom inspired martyrdom; young and old alike showed magni-

ficent courage and persistence. Claverhouse threatened, condemned, executed. He was a splendid soldier, but a merciless persecutor, and he was determined to enforce his orders. But in spite of his severity he found himself, after countless atrocities, as far as ever from shaking the faith of a nation bent upon enduring anything rather than becoming apostates. News of their fierce resistance was sent to James. The tidings did not rouse in him any spark of admiration for so devoted a race, and the persecution was carried on with increasing severity.

In the first eagerness of their welcome the Commons had voted James a sum of nearly two millions a year for life, so that by this means he was practically freed from the check of keeping their good-will. There was no need for him to follow the easy-going policy of Charles by yielding for the sake of getting supplies. The resources placed at his disposal freed him from unpleasant obligations, and left him full opportunity for carrying out any personal policy he chose to adopt. His burning ambition was to make a figure abroad, and for this purpose he was not above intriguing with Louis. But he hated the position of being under the control of the French monarch, and for a time he held aloof. Louis soon saw through the motive of this coldness, and he knew he could afford to wait. "*Le roi, mon frère est fier,*" he said shrewdly to his minister, "*mais il aime assez les pistoles de France.*" Louis' guess was right. French gold soon drew the English king. Expenses had mounted up in dealing with Scotland; in suppressing Monmouth's rebellion; and in satisfying the demands of the queen (Anne Hyde). These made serious inroads upon the king's large revenue. If he meant to pursue any militant policy abroad there was but one remedy, and like Charles he gave way to the indignity of receiving secret supplies from

Louis. Before long these negotiations began to be suspected, and a sense of uneasiness crept over the nation. The atrocious cruelty, with which James had permitted Judge Jefferies to visit his vengeance upon the followers of Monmouth, was an ominous object lesson to the country. If these things were done in the green tree, what would be done in the dry? Neither mercy nor justice was to be expected from the drunken, ferocious judge, who rolled into court, "inflamed and staring like one distracted." Never did greater bully sit in the place of judgment. His savage looks were enough to frighten prisoners out of their senses. "His voice," says a contemporary, "was like the thunder of the day of judgment . . . and nothing ever made men tremble like his vocal inflictions. He loved to insult and was bold without check."

It was once remarked about a certain prisoner that he was a trimmer. "A trimmer," roared the judge. "I have heard much of that monster but never saw one," and he ordered him to stand forth. Scared and trembling, the unhappy victim was only too glad to escape with nothing worse than words. Later, when one of his friends asked him how he had come off, he replied fearsomely: "I am escaped from the terrors of that man's face which I would scarce undergo again to save my life, and I shall certainly have the frightful impression of it as long as I live." Such was the man upon whom James lavished favour, raising him finally to the high office of Lord Chancellor.

The fancied security of his position soon increased in the king the Stewart tendency towards despotism which Charles II. had been wise enough to lay by. The army had been steadily increased; and James believed he held it in his grasp. He began to make plans for the overthrow of the Habeas Corpus Act, which he looked upon as an injury against the rights of a king. His ideas about the

prerogative of monarchs rested mainly upon the doctrines of Hobbes, who maintained that the king was "sole legislator, and supreme judge of controversies"; who alone had power "to choose magistrates, counsellors, commanders, and all other officers and ministers; and to determine of rewards and punishments, honour and order." The king was now bent upon putting this doctrine into practice, and with rank madness he demanded a repeal of the Test Act. No excuses can be found for this foolish proceeding. James was no stripling in the hands of unwise counsellors. He was a man in middle life. He had had every opportunity of studying and understanding the temper of the Commons. In his heart he must have been aware that he was behaving in a manner likely to bring about his ruin, since the sores of the nation were not yet healed, and to open them again might cause a death struggle. And was it likely that James would fare better than his father, if the matter came to grips? Would a sovereign, so contemptible that he was openly insulted in a popular song, be able to hold his own against a united and determined nation?

Perhaps some fleeting idea of the direction in which he was drifting may have crossed the king's mind. If it did, he at once and contemptuously dismissed it, to pursue more keenly than ever his fatal personal policy. His theory that the king was beyond legal control was supported by his servile judges. "The new, very young Lord Chief Justice Herbert," says Evelyn, "declared on the bench that the government of England was entirely in the King; that the Crown was absolute; . . . that he could pardon all offences against the Law . . . and why could he not dispense with them." On these grounds the king abolished the Test Act, at which, Evelyn remarks quaintly, "Everyone was astonished."

Surprise, however, soon gave way to indignation, when

it was found that by holding out the bait of a general indulgence towards every shade of creed, James was making a bid to join the Catholic and sectarian bodies into one against the Episcopalians.

To enforce his will, he unlawfully revived the Court of High Commission, after which, in 1688, he suddenly issued a second Declaration of Indulgence, ordered to be read from every pulpit in the land. This unconstitutional act roused loud opposition, and Nonconformists were as eager as Episcopalians in demanding resistance. No favours of religious liberty were to be considered for a moment, when their purchase hung upon civil tyranny. James was dogged ; the people were equally so. The Seven Bishops took upon their shoulders the responsibility of refusal to read what the king had ordered. Then came the trial, at which they were acquitted. All England listened for the verdict, and at the news a great shout went up. Bells pealed and bonfires blazed, all of which " was taken very ill at Court," where the king looked on, muttering and grumbling to himself.

In the midst of this excitement a little prince had been born, but the people were so inflamed with suspicion that they refused to believe that the child was really the son of James. Great tumults followed, and the nation decided to invite William of Orange to bring a Dutch army into England to summon a free Parliament. The tidings threw James into alarm, and he made wild and rapid concessions. But the moment for making terms had gone by. The band of self-seeking, greedy courtiers melted away like a bubble, and the king, who a while since had been the centre of a servile, smooth-spoken throng, suddenly found himself very desolate, and quite without friends.

In his despair he thought of his old ally, Louis, and after hesitating as long as he dared he secretly fled to France.

His flight relieved the strain in the country, and made a settlement possible. The people were at one in their goodwill towards the Prince and Princess of Orange ; religious and political differences were forgotten, and with one accord they begged William to come over to occupy the seat of government. By his ill-considered departure James had abdicated the throne. Even those who inclined towards a belief in the divine rights of kings gave William a welcome, defending their action upon the ground that since the king had chosen to resign his office he had no further power over his subjects. " Had our sovereign remained among us," they said, " we were ready, little as he deserved our love, to die at his feet. Had he, when he quitted us, appointed us a regency to govern us with vicarious authority during his absence, to that regency alone should we have looked for direction. But he has disappeared, having made no provision for the preservation of order or the administration of justice. . . . He who was the magistrate, after long abusing his powers, has at last abdicated them. The abuse did not give us a right to depose him ; but the abdication gives us a right to consider how we may best supply his place."

In 1689 the Declaration of Right was drawn up, and in due course William III. became king. The " Glorious Revolution " had accomplished its work without violence or bloodshed. The nation was at one in realising that nothing mattered so vitally as a *settled constitution*, in which the rights of the people and the rights of the monarch should be defined with equal precision. A hundred years had passed since the English had upheld their national independence against the Armada of Spain. In the century that had gone, the battle had been transferred from foreign considerations to intimate domestic problems. Now, after many ups and downs, firm ground had been

reached, and the nation stood victorious, holding in one hand the token of religious freedom, and in the other the symbol of civil liberty.

Meanwhile James had reached St Germain's, where he was courteously and generously treated by Louis. Every respect was shown him. So that he soon became absorbed in the novelty of his new home, where he found neither anxiety nor opposition. Here he lived, a constant menace to William, against whom he soon began to make plots. But though Louis promised help, and though many of the English were soon ready to second any Jacobite rising, the great bulk of the nation held firmly to the House of Orange. And even in these last and desperate ventures, James showed himself so bent upon exerting absolute power, that he lost the sympathy of many who dared not put trust in his promises of clemency and good faith. The news of his death in 1701 was received with relief by the English people. His hold on the imagination of the public had long since loosened, and his death roused no great emotion. "The death of King James," observes Evelyn, "happening on the fifteenth of this month [September], put an end to that unhappy Prince's troubles, after a short and unprosperous reign, indiscreetly attempting to bring in Popery, and make himself absolute in imitation of the French . . . which the Nation would not endure." Thus his life ended in exile and ignominy. Yet he might have ruled wisely and well. For he had excellent business-like qualities, fair abilities, and he was persevering and painstaking. But he was headstrong and callous, and no cruelty held him back from carrying out his own whims. Common-sense and sympathy were alike unknown to him, and he lacked both the affability and the prudence which had successfully prevented Charles II. from falling into desperate dilemmas.

WILLIAM III AND MARY

"We have trees in our town that bear fruit in winter : : : I am one of those winter plums, and though I taste a little sour, yet I am sound at heart."
ARBER'S REPRINT

"His wish by hers was echo'd."

TENNYSON

THE hasty and bloodless revolution of 1688 ended abruptly after the arrival of William of Orange in London. His coming thither had been delayed by the hesitation of James, but as soon as the Stewart monarch had fled to France, William marched at once upon the capital. It was more than a month since he had landed at Torbay, on 5th November, and public jubilation, strung to its highest pitch by the delay, now broke out into wild enthusiasm. The streets were alive with onlookers. Every window had its ribbons, and its group of eager faces ; the air rang with the shouts of a thousand voices. Were they not welcoming a ruler who came to them as a deliverer ? Could any honour be too great for a prince who had snatched them from the tyranny of James ? "To such a strange temper, unheard of in former times," says Evelyn, "was this poore nation reduced."

But on this December morning the citizens were far too excited at the idea of beholding their new ruler to spend time upon thoughts of "former times." Soon a shout told that the prince was in sight. The whispering,

joyous citizens dropped their chatter for a moment, and strained forward in order not to miss a detail of the pageant. A glance at William's long, thin, solemn face damped their first outbursts. With his lank cheeks and dark skin he looked like a foreigner, in itself "a sort of crime in English eyes." The shouts grew a little fainter, as men paused to turn and inquire of their neighbours an opinion of the prince just gone by. The women, no doubt, answered that they had seen nothing but royal Mary, the best and sweetest of princesses. But the crowd in general was vastly disappointed. This sense of chagrin lasted throughout the reign. In spite of his many splendid qualities, William was never a favourite with the nation. With Mary it was quite different. As the daughter of James II. her appearance as an English queen was natural and fitting. But it was not only this sense of satisfaction that made her welcome. Her gentle courtesy, and her amiability, won the love of everybody. Her tact, her goodness, shone all the brighter beside the rough curtness of the king. She was adored at Court, and idolised by the people. William's native brusqueries were often forgiven for her sake, and many a time she charmed away ill-feeling the king had unfortunately roused. William's public behaviour towards her was often wanting in niceties of politeness; but he loved her with a deep and boundless passion, and her death in 1694 overwhelmed him with grief. What were all his triumphs of statesmanship compared with the loss of so beloved a wife? He wandered about, restless and miserable, so that even the most unsympathetic retainer felt a pang at the sorrow of his sovereign. Seven years later, when William himself had passed away, reverent hands removed from his neck a black ribbon, on which hung a ring and a lock of Mary's hair. Such was the pure devotion between



William III

Jan Wyck

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

these two, who now came to the throne of England, amid the jubilation of an entire nation.

Naturally enough the excess of enthusiasm led to a reaction. William's short manners offended some of the ablest ministers. His devotion to business disgusted his courtiers ; and his stern temper offended the gay mob of women, used to bandying idle nothings with their sovereign. The Stewarts had always been ready enough to listen to suitors greedy for self-advancement. But to all such William gave a deaf ear, and he did not hide his disgust at flattery. His own nature was strenuous, and he expected everyone else to be equally zealous. His plans were often unknown even to the queen, who accepted this trait of character with her usual serenity. But the courtiers were not satisfied so easily, and by the day of the coronation, in April 1689, public indignation had found a voice. Many coarse lampoons were successfully launched against the new sovereign, who was now sneeringly hailed in a ditty, with the contemptuous refrain :

" A dainty fine king indeed."

Before long the followers of King James began to talk of usurpation, and soon the sterner religious sects found cause for complaint in Queen Mary's gay mood. Sermons were preached against this undutiful daughter, merry in the midst of her father's misfortunes. Evelyn records bitinglly that, " she came into Whitehall laughing and jolly, as to a wedding, so as to seem quite transported. . . . She smiled upon and talk'd to everybody, so that no change seemed to have taken place at Court since her last going away."

Among the Ministers of State it had been proposed to invest Mary with the right of government, and only install William as Regent. This plan was promptly refused by the prince, who said sharply that he would never be

his "wife's gentleman usher." The discussion ended by granting the kingship to William and Mary jointly, though the real executive power was given to the king, by a clause in the Bill of Rights, which asserted that "the sole and full exercise of the regal power be only in, and executed by, the said Prince of Orange."

In this way began the reign of a sovereign of whom Hallam observes, "it must ever be an honour to the English Crown that it was worn by so great a man." Unfortunately much of William's splendid ability was hidden from the people of the time. On the other hand, his uncourtly manners and petty traits of character roused not a little bad feeling, so that throughout the first part of his reign there was a good deal of discontent in the country. The Commons were anxious to please, but they did not intend to part with one jot of the power they had gained since the great Parliament of 1640. They granted the king supplies for life, but they made them dependent upon yearly renewal. This safeguard in itself ensured an annual Parliament, but, to make doubly sure, a new Bill called the Mutiny Act was passed in 1689, placing military law upon the same renewable footing. Henceforward the sovereign would be forced to summon Parliament once a year in order that fresh supplies might be granted, and the power of maintaining discipline in the army reaffirmed. These new regulations greatly strengthened the hands of the Commons, and marked one more step in the direction of our modern political system.

William set about straightening the affairs of the kingdom with wisdom and precision. He was a born statesman, and he honourably and sincerely wished to place the government of England upon a secure and just basis. But the nation was to him a foreign nation, just as he was to the people a foreign prince. They had no affection for

him, nor he for them. He enjoyed the power that the kingship of England gave him, but any advantages he reaped from his position were more than balanced by the benefits he brought the nation.

His ability soon roused foes, and the number of his enemies grew rapidly. Scarcely was he on the throne when there were schemes for the restoration of James. These plots left William's fine temper untouched with either bitterness or resentment. His only reply was to take every possible measure to secure the crown he had sworn to uphold. The claims of his own small country made many demands upon his affection, and he dearly longed to have leisure to attend to them. But he resolutely set aside Dutch affairs, till he had settled more pressing matters. Scotland and Ireland both offered him steady resistance, and for the time being he had more than enough to do. The worst stain upon his government occurs in his relations with the northern kingdom, and a cloud yet hangs over the sinister tragedy at Glencoe. The real motive for that dark and treacherous deed must for ever remain a matter of conjecture, though it is almost certain that private revenge lay at the heart of it. The odium of the crime undoubtedly belongs to others rather than to William, though he cannot be wholly freed from guilt in the matter. Clan jealousy made the cruel Earl of Breadalbane, and the revengeful Master of Stair, rejoice secretly at the delayed submission of the Macdonalds of Glencoe. Trickery was employed ; documents were kept back ; and a foul scheme set on foot for taking an unholy vengeance. The matter was explained to William, but only carelessly and in general terms. He set his name to a paper declaring that if Mac Ian of Glencoe and his tribe could be separated from the rest, it would be well as a "vindication of public justice to extirpate that

set of thieves." Macaulay upholds the probable view that William no doubt looked upon the clan as a knot of wild highwaymen, stained by many crimes, who acknowledged no law, and were a pest to the country generally. In this case their extermination would be no more than an act of public justice, and any ruler might place his name against an order for the punishment of wilful outlawry.

The details of the terrible tragedy that followed are well known. At the beginning of February 1692 the troops of Argyle entered the valley on terms of peace. Twelve days later they left it with reeking hands, branded with the odium of treachery and murder. The news did not reach London for many months, and then only scantily and unconfirmed. For as soon as their wicked plot had been carried out, Breadalbane and Stair began to be scared. The horror must be hushed up at all costs, and above all William must not know. Happily he was in Holland; meanwhile the affair would die down. Weeks afterwards vague rumours came to the king's ears, and he ordered the Earl of Hamilton to make an inquiry. Then Hamilton died, and the matter was thrust aside and forgotten, without William ever grasping exactly what had happened. For in those days the Highlands of Scotland hung vaguely in the public mind as a vast, uncivilised, distant region. "The Londoner of those days," says Macaulay, ". . . was not more moved by hearing that some Highland thieves had been surprised and killed, than we are by hearing that a band of Amakosah cattle stealers has been cut off, or that a bark full of Malay pirates has been sunk. . . . There had been a night brawl, one of the hundred night brawls between the Macdonalds and the Campbells; and the Campbells had knocked the Macdonalds on the head."

Meanwhile in Ireland, as well as in Scotland, there was the greatest unrest and discontent. The exiled monarch

took advantage of the moment, and after a good deal of hesitation he resolved to cross to Kinsale and try his fortunes. The Catholics welcomed him warmly. Soldiers and arms were put at his disposal. But James II. was no general, and he hopelessly bungled matters. Londonderry fell before the English, after a long and terrible siege. Then came the battle of the Boyne (1690). In this encounter, William himself took part, and his brave bearing made the nervous fear of James seem all the more despicable. With the high serenity of real courage William dashed wherever danger was thickest. But James kept on the outskirts, and watched from afar, trembling, and white with panic. When the soldiers of William derided the valour of their enemies, the Irish retorted hotly : " Change kings with us and we will fight you again." The battle decided the supremacy of William and established his superb powers as a general. It also made manifest the weakness and cowardice of James. Besides this it was a further triumph for the passionate, militant Protestantism, so characteristic of the Stewart and later Tudor periods. Chapmen were everywhere busy offering the latest doggerel of the day, amongst which was the Londonderry chorus :

*" Protestant Boys, both valiant and stout,
Fear not the strength and power of Rome,
Thousands of them are put to the rout,
Brave Londonderry tells 'um their doom."*

Scotland and Ireland being for the time settled, William turned his attention to the Continent, where Louis XIV. was still trying to overstep his rightful powers. Three months after the last cry of agony had pierced the night air of the valley of Glencoe, the English met and defeated the French in a great sea battle off La Hogue (1692).

This advantage was followed by land defeats at Steinkirk and Landen, but William's deep courage never flagged, and he cheerfully urged on his men to fresh and more heroic efforts. It seemed a miracle that the army could hold out so long against Louis' great troops, but perseverance met with its reward in 1695, when William's men captured Namur.

The great Treaty of Ryswick followed in 1697, and William proved for ever the wisdom of the daring policy to which he had devoted his life. By this peace Louis acknowledged William as King of England and declared he "would not countenance, in any manner, any attempt to subvert or disturb the existing Government of England."

This important agreement settled foreign affairs, and at the same time it greatly strengthened the power of the English Parliament. For Louis' acknowledgment of William meant that foreign nations showed their approval of the action of the Commons, in obeying the nation's call for the removal of their sovereign. James was for ever discredited, and the theory of Divine Right totally extinguished. The news of the alliance was received with wild excitement, so that even the dullest onlooker, on the day when the rumour first got abroad, must have caught some enthusiasm from the joyous crowds. The whole nation seemed at play, and the people laughed and sang like children. Newspapers had just begun to make their appearance, and a special sheet was hastily printed and offered for sale. William became a national hero, and his praises fell lavishly from every tongue. His return from the Continent was the signal for rapturous joy. The Bishop of Salisbury preached a "panegyric" at Whitehall. Every shop was closed in holiday, and London was thronged with country folk, pressing in to see the show. At night the streets were alive with songs and

laughter, and a magnificent display of fireworks lit up the blackness of the sky. Even the taciturn king showed emotion at the open joy of the people, who for the moment forgot everything else, save that here was the man who had checkmated the genius of the French king and added a new glory to England's name.

Prosperity followed upon the steps of peace. Trade revived and increased rapidly. The East India Company was thriving; and in 1694 the Bank of England had been established. Scotland, however, nursed a grievance, through the failure in 1698 of the Darien Scheme. This great enterprise had aimed at founding a colony of traders on the narrow isthmus joining North and South America. But the climate was ill-suited for Scots, used to severer conditions, and the plan ended in dismal failure. However it was only one failure in the midst of many successes. Trade had gained a firm foothold, and every month strengthened its position.

But though peace seemed to have settled upon the country, William's keen eye foresaw troubles on the horizon. Charles II. of Spain was old and feeble. On his death, Louis would almost certainly try to secure the crown for his son, and then the plight of England, with France and Spain leagued together under a single monarch, would be worse than ever. Two Partition Treaties tried to solve the difficulty, but, on the death of Charles, Louis soon broke his faith. Dissatisfaction again made itself felt, and the Tory party spoke with biting contempt of William's policy. All the hidden dislike of a sovereign who was a "foreigner" showed itself suddenly in a series of petty regulations. The king was not to leave England without asking leave of the Commons; no ministers were to sit in the House of Commons; judges were only to be sent away upon the agreement of the Lords and Commons.

This last regulation irritated William unduly—probably because it was the last straw. He declared he would not sign the Bill, and by so doing he unwisely put himself into direct opposition to the Government. In the midst of these quarrels the king fell ill. He had been flung from his horse, and though the injuries were not in themselves great they proved too much for him in his poor health. Anxiety, sorrow, and incessant work had long since taken toll, and he had no strength to resist the fever which set in. After a few days' illness he died, on 8th March 1702. "His end," says Macaulay, "was worthy of his life. . . . His fortitude was the more admirable because he was not willing to die." He yearned to see the finish of the new struggle just beginning in Spain, and to one of his friends he said wistfully : "You know that I never feared death; there have been times when I should have wished it; but, now that this great new prospect is opening before me, I do wish to stay here a little longer." But doctors were powerless to gratify his desire, and very soon all was over.

His greatest triumph had followed after the Peace of Ryswick, but even then it had soon been darkened by clouds of discontent. He had the unhappy knack of always displaying his worst side, so that many of his actions were misjudged. None but his queen and a few friends knew how deep and true his nature was; how he shrank from slander and injustice; how heroically he struggled after high endeavours. His private virtues, and his genius as a statesman were alike undiscovered by his contemporaries, and it is only by later historians that he has been hailed as one of the greatest kings England has ever known.

ANNE

*" As when a soul laments, which hath been blest,
Desiring what is mingled with past years,
In yearnings that can never be exprest
By sighs, or groans, or tears ;*

*Because all words, tho' culled with choicest art,
Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
Faints, faded by its heat."*

TENNYSON

THE accession of Queen Anne in 1702 was enthusiastically hailed by the nation. The younger daughter of James II. by his wife, Anne Hyde, she had the merit of being thoroughly English. This alone made her popular. The greater part of the people had always looked upon William with the suspicion given to a "foreigner," and his very kindnesses towards them had often been accepted grudgingly. Anne herself had no love for her predecessor, and neither good sense nor loyalty had held her back from making her court in England a centre of opposition to the king in his lifetime. Her efforts in this direction had been furthered by Churchill, afterwards the famous Duke of Marlborough, who never lost an opportunity of thwarting the monarch. William had good reason to feel uneasy about the good faith of Churchill, and the ill-feeling between them was fostered by military rivalry. William felt doubtful about giving too much power into the hands of a soldier whose honesty was uncertain ; and, on his side, Churchill was

secretly jealous of the splendid military tactics born of William's genius. The breach was further widened by a suspicion that Anne was secretly agreeing to the restoration of the Stewart interest, in the person of James Edward Stewart, the Old Pretender. News of the intrigue came by degrees into the palace, rousing the flame of William's anger. Churchill and his wife were driven hastily from Court, and with them went the Princess Anne. The bitterness between William and Anne was too violent and too open to admit of any genuine reconciliation. Anne was completely in the hands of her companions. Acting upon their advice, she declared that she repented of her share in the Revolution, and made definite advances towards James. Her hostility affected so profoundly her sister, Queen Mary, that even in the hour of dying she refused to see her again. Mary's nature was so sweet and amiable, that her firmness on this occasion points the conclusion that Anne's conduct must have been tinged with the deepest treachery in order to inspire such steady anger.

After the death of Queen Mary in 1694 William was obliged to recall the Princess Anne, though he must have found her presence in England a political embarrassment, as well as a personal annoyance. But he made heroic efforts to sink private emotions in the public good, and when he was dying he strongly advised the queen-elect to let Churchill manage the military affairs of the kingdom. Such self-forgetfulness may perhaps have caused some surprise in the heart of the narrow-minded princess, but it is more likely that she accepted it without question, and without understanding the generosity of the advice. Whether William had asked her or not, it is certain she would have let Churchill manage her affairs. For at the time of her accession she was so devoted to this statesman

that she was willing to let him have any and every power.

William died; Anne was crowned; and three days later Churchill was made Captain-General of the Forces. His appointment happened to be a master-stroke of diplomacy, though it is only fair to confess that in making it, Anne was guided entirely by her personal inclination. She gave him the position because she wanted him to have it, not from motives of statecraft. But it fortunately happened that her feelings led her into doing what was by far the best thing for the country. For Churchill was a strong Tory, and the Tories, hitherto opposed to the war against France, were pacified by seeing a Tory general at the head of the army, while the Whigs did not care *who* led the troops, so long as the campaign was undertaken. So that all parties were fairly well pleased, and Anne had the satisfaction of finding herself popular with both political sections, as well as with the general mass of the people.

Her own accomplishments were of the slightest. She had neither ability to form a policy of her own, nor tact to submit generously to the counsels of those best fitted to advise her. Her reign, nevertheless, has justly acquired great glory. But the illumination is due to the number of able men who adorned the epoch, rather than to any great qualities displayed by the queen. The reigns of Elizabeth and Anne both stand out in history as periods of great achievement; though the royal influence exercised by the Tudor sovereign was hopelessly beyond the power of Queen Anne. Both monarchs earned the title of "Good." Elizabeth won the term because the people loved and revered her. It was given to Anne for quite different reasons. Anne's personality was not strong enough to awaken either love or hate in the nation. She was "good" because she was a pure and virtuous queen. But though

the term implies all this, in her case it also hints at mediocrity.

Anne's commonplace disposition made her the prey of violent and ambitious characters, and at all times she was easily moved by feminine influence. Since girlhood she had been extremely friendly with Sarah Jennings, the wife of Churchill, and the two had carried on a warm, informal correspondence under the names of "Mrs Morley" and "Mrs Freeman," Anne using the former title and her friend the latter. This intimacy was continued with arrogance, and even with insolence, on the part of the hot-tongued, ardent wife of Churchill. But Anne was blind to the faults of her favourite, and meekly suffered at her hands indignities which she would have resented bitterly from others. Between Churchill and his wife was a bond of extreme affection, and the general largely relied for influence with the queen upon the plans of the duchess. For some time all went well. Anne was extravagant in her bounty. She opened her private purse; she showered rare gifts; "Mrs Freeman" took everything eagerly, but she was never satisfied. She believed she was secure in Anne's affection, and gradually she began to show some of the contempt bred by too great familiarity. For a time Anne endured it patiently, then suddenly she grasped the fact that she was in the hands of a tyrant of her own making. She began to hate the friend she had hitherto adored. "Mrs Freeman"—a duchess since 1702—found herself ousted by Abigail Hill (Mrs Masham), one of her own cousins, whom she had herself brought into Anne's notice. In vain she scolded, begged, implored; Anne remained quite unmoved. "I remember," wrote the duchess passionately, "that a long time before this being with the Queen, to whom I had gone very privately by a secret passage, on a sudden this woman, not knowing I

was there, came in with the boldest and gayest air imaginable, but upon sight of me stopped, and immediately changing her manner and making a most solemn curtsy asked, 'Did your Majesty ring?' "

Anne had been so obedient in the hands of the Marlboroughs that for long the duchess could not understand that a lasting change had taken place. It was too much for her to believe that *she*, the beloved duchess, should be ousted from Court. Forgetting all decorum and self-respect, she passed through every stage of attack upon the queen, from ratings and scoldings to the most miserable grovellings. At last Anne refused to see her any more, and simply sent word that she must give up the gold key of her office. With a last explosion the duchess tore it from her person, and flung it to the duke to bear to the sovereign. Her downfall, which was thus complete, had in the beginning been hastened by certain petty little acts against her rival, Mrs Masham. Tradition asserts that at a State banquet the duchess contrived to spill a glass of water, as if by accident, over Mrs Masham's gown. The queen remarked the deed, and it pleased her very ill. "And so," wrote Voltaire, "from the trifling cause of a pair of gloves, which the Duchess refused the queen, and a glass of water, insolently spilt on the gown of Mrs Masham, the whole face of Europe was changed."

Anne's lack of judgment was strongly shown in her dealings both with her statesmen and with the Church. She could be obstinate upon occasion, and she clung fiercely to the theory that she had the right to appoint her own ministers. In 1710 she suddenly determined to make the Duke of Shrewsbury Lord Chamberlain in the place of the Marquis of Kent. Without so much as mentioning the matter to any of her advisers, she pacified Kent with a dukedom and gave his office to Shrewsbury. This was

a distinct challenge to the Lord Treasurer, Godolphin, and if he meant to raise an objection he would have done well to make it quickly and with vigour. He did neither; for in matters calling for prompt action, it was characteristic of Godolphin to hesitate about taking a definite side. He wrote to the queen, but in such a style that the letter only made her realise afresh, that having got her own way in this affair, it would be much easier in the future to gather round her statesmen whom she liked, rather than submit to those put forward by the Commons. Anne had triumphed, but she had done so at the expense of sacrificing public interest to private inclination.

Only a little while before she had allowed herself to give way to a similar display of private emotion. It was upon the occasion of the famous Sacheverell trial. A sermon preached at St Paul's, in November 1709, by Dr Henry Sacheverell had roused a sudden and extraordinary tumult. The preacher had thundered against the principles of the Revolution; he had let fly shafts against the Dissenters; he had made bitter allusion to "Volpone," the well-known nickname of Godolphin. As a result of the address the Jacobite cause had been given a new impetus. The cry that the Church was in danger rallied a number of new followers, and London was quickly in a ferment. If the matter had been ignored it is probable it would soon have died down and been forgotten, like most other sermons. But it was published, and bought up greedily. The Whigs were full of rage. Godolphin was sore from the allusions to himself, and the whole party gnashed their teeth. They determined to impeach the rash preacher, not realising that by doing so they were giving him the very notoriety he desired. He was tried and found guilty, but the sentence passed upon him was so light that it was generally thought to be an acquittal. He was forbidden

to preach for three years ; but he still read the service, and it became the fashion to have him to perform at baptisms. By the actions of his opponents he had leapt into fame. Anne's delight was unbounded. At a moment when a judicious sovereign would have been at pains to keep from displaying personal bias she was openly enthusiastic for Sacheverell. In this she showed herself anything but prudent ; since it was surely imperative for her own interest, as well as for the safety of the nation, that the principles of the Revolution settlement of 1689 should be strictly upheld by the sovereign. It was in points like these that Anne showed the strain of her parentage, betraying as the grand-daughter of the Earl of Clarendon an indulgence in personal feeling such as often marks the pages of Clarendon's great "History." The street ballads of 1710 show very clearly the pitch to which the excitement had risen. The long drain of the war with France had caused a popular cry for peace. The Whigs, as the war party, were hotly and constantly blamed. Very unwillingly Anne had submitted to Marlborough's orders, appointing Whig ministers where she longed for Tory ones, but always with a blind sense of resentment against the purposeful general, who commanded so regally. One of the bitterest songs of the day, called "A Tory Pill to Purge Whig Melancholy," expressed the situation with frank bluntness.

*" King William on our knees we curse, and damn the Revolution.
And to preserve the Nation's Peace we study its confusion ;*

*With treacherous heart and double tongue, both parties we adhere to,
Pray for the side we swear against and curse the side we swear to.*

*That Queens may Parliaments dissolve, no doubt 'tis right and
just,
But we have found it out that now, because she may she must.*

*The bankrupt Nation to restore, and pay the millions lent,
We'll at one dash wipe out the score with sponge of Parliament.*

*If not we'll close with terms of Peace, prescribed by France and Rome,
That war being huddled up abroad, may then break out at home."*

Anne's own desire was towards peace, for her natural disposition was kind and compassionate. When there seemed a prospect of a truce being signed she said heartily : " I am sure I long for peace : I hate this dreadful work of blood." Such being her inclination it must have afforded her deep content when the kingdoms of England and Scotland were formally united in 1707. This wholly admirable act was not brought about without a good deal of the popular resistance, which so often marks any change in the laws of a country. Blind to future benefits, a large portion of the Scottish people saw in the alliance nothing but humiliation for themselves and glory for England. They did not see the great development of trade that would follow ; the commercial benefits that would be theirs ; the stability which would be of advantage to both nations. They thought only of the loss of individuality, and, although Scottish legislation was left untouched, in all matters of a legal or ecclesiastical nature, the fact that henceforth the Scottish Parliament would be represented in the English assembly by forty-five commoners and sixteen peers, seemed to many a Scottish crofter like deliberately selling his birthright. From the first moment of her reign the idea of such a union had been dear to Anne. The formal speech which she made upon the subject before the Parliament of 1710 no doubt represented her own feelings, though the words had been furnished by one of her ministers : " I consider," she said, " this union as a matter of the greatest importance to the wealth, strength and safety of the whole island . . . and

therefore I make no doubt but it will be remembered and spoken of hereafter to the honour of those who have been instrumental in bringing it to such a happy conclusion." These wise words, however, fell upon deaf ears in Scotland, and many a Celtic bard penned a passionate lament.

*" O Caledon, O Caledon, look back from whence you fell,
And from your sufferings learn your guilt and never more rebel ;
Regain your ancient Liberties, redeem your Rights and Laws,
Restore your injur'd lawful King, or perish in the Cause."*

More bitter, though less passionate, was the " Scotsman's Lament " :

*" Shall Monarchy be quite forgot, and of it no more heard ?
Antiquity be raséd out, and Slav'ry put instead ?
Is Scotsmen's blood now grown so cold, the valour of their mind
That they can never once reflect on old long sine ?*

*Was not our nation sometime brave, invincible and stout ?
Conquering Cæsar, that great king, could not put it to rout :
Nor not so much as tribute get, for all his great design ;
These men, I think, thought to maintain good old long sine.*

*Now mark and see what is the cause of this so great a fall,
Contempt of faith, falsehood, deceit and villainy withal ;
But rouse yourselves like Scottish lads, and quit yourselves as men,
And more and more strive to maintain good old long sine."*

On the 1st August 1714 Anne died. For some time it had been plain that she was seriously ill, and Bolingbroke's party had been hastily preparing for a *coup d'état* on behalf of the Pretender. But before the arrangements were finished the queen's death took place, and the Whig party at once proclaimed the accession of George.

As a queen, Anne had suffered a good many ups and downs at the hands of her ministers. Not clever enough

to enter into their schemes, she must often have felt baffled, dumb, and helpless. She was sincerely anxious to rule well, but her very moderate abilities prevented her from taking a leading part. She was thus sometimes the shuttlecock to both political parties, who forced her into policies which she personally detested. A strain of sadness runs through the story of her life. All her children died young; her affections lavished upon the Duchess of Marlborough turned to dust and ashes. She had not enough personality to attract hero-worship, though it may be hazarded that she often wistfully longed for the little, spontaneous shows of affection dear to most women. Her reign is one of the brightest in English history. Great men laid the ornament of their genius upon it; Newton's achievements were hailed even then with admiration and applause. It was undoubtedly a great epoch, and there is thus something poignant in the reflection that the figure of Queen Anne herself seems somehow a little outside it all.

Phase II—The State

GEORGE VILLIERS, FIRST DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

"He was such a darling of fortune, that he was at the top before he was well seen at the bottom ; and, as if he had been born a favourite, he was supreme the first month he came to Court."

CLARENDON

*"Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust."*

SHIRLEY

IT was one of the chief characteristics of James I. that he always needed the companionship of a favourite to bolster him up in his undertakings. His hand was against his Parliament, and this made him feel the more sorely the need of a man at hand to soothe and flatter him when things went awry. Thus more than one young man sprang into unworthy fame through working upon the weakness of the sovereign, and benefits which should have been given to deserving statesmen, were snatched up by greedy courtiers who knew how to play upon the king's foolish good nature. Last in the train of these hangers-on, but in point of importance easily first, was George Villiers, afterwards Duke of Buckingham.

Born in 1592, the son of a knight in the county of Leicestershire, Villiers had little in the way of fortune save a handsome face and pleasing manners. As it happened, these brought him further than the most hopeful admirer

could have foreseen. He was neither industrious nor well educated. All the learning he possessed had been got at a small local school at Billesden, hard by his home. But at thirteen his schooling came to an end, and any further information he gathered came to him from his own observation, or from mixing with other people.

His mother was a frivolous woman, full of social ambitions. She saw very early that her son was well suited for the easy life of an idle courtier, and with this end in view she had him taught every art likely to be of value at Court. Long before he had grown into young manhood he could fence and dance to perfection, or do a hundred things likely to please and delight the eye of a pleasure-loving monarch. But even so, it seemed rather a hopeless task to try to bring him into the notice of James. Friends were few, and for the most part of small importance. How would it be possible for the youth to get a chance of winning a footing at Court ?

So the years went by, some spent in travel on the Continent, others frittered in loitering and pleasure-making, and though Villiers had made many a fashionable friend he was still outside the magic circle. A chance came in 1615, when he was twenty-three years of age. Sir James Graham, one of the lesser-known figures at Court, was accompanying James on a progress through England, and he invited Villiers to come with him. The invitation was eagerly accepted, but without any thought of the great events which would follow. For as it turned out, this invitation was nothing less than the key to fortune. The king no sooner saw Villiers than he admired him passionately. His easy manners, his handsome face, and his graceful bearing all delighted a monarch who was hopelessly plain and awkward in appearance. All the advantages of face and figure, which James felt so painfully

were not his own, he saw in the person of this new courtier. He gazed at him with frank delight, and privately he let it be known that he meant to make him a favourite. From this point honours fell upon the new-comer in a fairy shower. He was cupbearer almost at once, and soon after Gentleman of the Bedchamber, while a pension of one thousand pounds a year gave him money to fit his position. All this happened within a twelvemonth, so that it was no wonder if Villiers began to regard himself as a person of unusual consequence. These favours, great though they were, were rapidly succeeded by others. The king could deny him nothing. In the heat of his passion James heaped upon him titles which he denied to more worthy suitors. In 1616 he was made a peer, and in 1617 he became an earl. As if this were not enough, the next year James created him a marquis, and in 1619 he elevated him to the position of Lord High Admiral of England, Ireland and Wales. All this in four short years ! For scarcely that time had gone by since Villiers had set off on that memorable journey, in the service of Sir James Graham.

The excessive love which James showed towards him had not failed to kindle indignation among the rest of his courtiers. With these Villiers was no favourite. They were jealous of his sudden and undeserved rise, and angered by the airs and graces he saw fit to assume. He strutted about like a king, and swaggered with an importance that onlookers found hard to endure. Wherever he went he was surrounded by a crowd of servants, and splendid jewels blazed upon his person. At the most ordinary function he would appear dressed in extravagant fashion, with "great diamond buttons" on his clothes, "diamond hatbands, cockades, and earrings." Long ropes of pearls were flung over his shoulders ; every inch had its special ornament. So that envious courtiers

remarked to one another with a jeer that he was "manacled, fettered and imprisoned in jewels." When he went abroad on a Court embassy he dressed with ill-advised magnificence, and it is reported that when he was at the height of his favour in 1625, he appeared in a white velvet suit, glittering with diamonds, and valued even in those days at no less than eighty thousand pounds. But however wanton and ridiculous his display might be, James only loved him the more for it. He was utterly blind to his faults, and though the most charitable could see in him glaring and odious faults, the king never regarded him with anything except affection and indulgence.

A man with a less coarse nature would have been ashamed to accept from his sovereign money and honours which the nation grudged him. But Villiers had no fine feelings in the matter of benefits, and in 1623 he heard with the utmost complacency that he had been created Duke of Buckingham.

He was abroad when the tidings reached him, for slightly before this he had travelled to Spain with Prince Charles on the ill-fated mission to the Infanta. A match between Charles and the Spanish princess had long been the darling wish of King James, and for many years he had been working to this end. Politically the union seemed wise, but there were religious difficulties in the way. The King of Spain would not agree to the alliance unless there were to be large benefits to the Roman Catholics, and the English nation as a whole was fiercely against anything of the kind. Matters had come to this state when suddenly Villiers made up his mind to go over to Spain with the young prince, to pay the Infanta a surprise visit. The king did his best to break down the arrangement. But Villiers had set his heart upon the project, and nothing less would satisfy him. His insolence towards the sovereign



The Duke of Buckingham

G. Honthorst

Photo Emery Walker

was so unveiled that anyone less indulgent than James would have flung him off. As it was he gave way very reluctantly, full of laments that he was "undone and that he would lose Baby Charles." As soon as the point was gained, Villiers did his utmost to soothe his sovereign. He was "his dog Steenie," his "gossip's humble slave," and he promised all sorts of good results from the rash undertaking. The king was still full of sighs and troubles, but he made no further objection, and a few days later "Baby Charles" and "Steenie" set off on their travels under the names of "Jack and Tom Smith," and with only one attendant to keep them company.

Once in Madrid all disguise was thrown off, and the King of Spain was informed of the presence of the English prince. The news no doubt caused him much amazement, for there was no Court where matters of etiquette were observed more strictly than in Spain. However, now that the prince was here the king resolved to receive him with due dignity and splendour. State banquets were hastily ordered, and Charles formally began his suit. Buckingham meanwhile was a sharer in all the festivities. But he forgot that he was no longer in the eye of a doting monarch, and he behaved with such pride and disdain that very soon he had roused decided ill-will among the Spanish courtiers. Oblivious to the feeling around him, or else reckless about its effect, he continued to play the part of an insolent favourite. Prince Charles, too, becoming tired of the long-drawn etiquette of the proceeding, tried to hasten matters by jumping down into a garden where the princess was sitting. This rash deed only gave offence, and added a new complication to matters already unsatisfactory enough. The situation soon became even worse, through quarrels between Buckingham and the Spanish minister, Olivarez. "Steenie" was not looking after

“Baby Charles” as well as he had promised to do, and though affectionate letters passed between “the venturous knights” and their “dear dad and gossip, James,” the English king began to grow anxious. Suddenly Buckingham changed his plans, and became as much against the match as he had formerly urged it. Making up some excuse he left the Spanish Court, leaving “Baby Charles” to his own devices. Without his friend at hand, the prince soon wearied of his position. He hastened to join Buckingham, and before long the two were on their way back to England. Preparations had already been made for the wedding. Yet now, only a few weeks before its celebration, the match was broken off, and apparently for no better reason than a whim on the part of the headstrong favourite. Spain was deeply annoyed, and demanded Buckingham’s head. But “Steenie” had little to fear while he had James and Charles to support him. He landed with his old air of easy carelessness, and he was quite ready to receive the shower of warm thanks that James poured upon him, for having brought “Baby Charles” home in safety. Moreover, for the moment he was actually a national hero. The people had been greatly afraid lest the heir of England should never come back from abroad, and they were grateful to Buckingham for his safe conduct. Besides this they were wild with joy at the news that the Catholic marriage they had dreaded would now never take place. Here again Buckingham got full credit for his share in the enterprise. He seized upon the moment to beg the king to summon a Parliament for the purpose of declaring hostility towards Spain. The Commons readily voted supplies, and in 1624 the country heard with delight that there was to be war.

But these outbursts of delight were soon changed to sullen murmurings ; for scarcely was the Spanish marriage

The Duke of Buckingham 101

cast off, when Buckingham came forward with plans for a union between Prince Charles and Henrietta Maria of France. The Protestants heard the tidings with dismay and surprise. What use were rejoicings over the failure of the Spanish match if a French alliance was to take its place? In the midst of general confusion and dissatisfaction, James I. died, and Buckingham entered upon a new phase in his career.

So far Charles, as a prince, had shown himself as devoted to "Steenie" as ever his father had been, but among the courtiers many hoped that on becoming king he would shake himself free from favourites, and rule with a firm, independent hand. These hopes were soon disappointed. For if Buckingham had flourished under James, under Charles he was almost supreme. Courtiers watched him with ill-concealed fury, hating this man who flaunted about in robes shining with gems; who bore himself with a good-natured insolence that was harder to bear than open hostility. The nation's good-will, which he had won for a time, now changed into settled dislike, and people and courtiers alike prayed that the king might be set free from the toils of so worthless a schemer. But for the time being Buckingham's star was still in the ascendant. The French match was completed; Henrietta Maria came over to England as the bride of Charles; and war with Spain became a certainty. It appeared as if the favourite had got his own way everywhere. Through him the Spanish match had failed; through him Henrietta Maria had become Queen of England; through him the country had plunged into war. Nevertheless, just at the moment when every plan seemed to have succeeded, the first shadow of evil fortune fell upon him. The first expedition against Spain went badly, and at Cadiz in 1625 the English fleet was hopelessly beaten. Popular feeling at once

swung round, and when the people were faced with defeat, they did not forget the fact that it was through Buckingham that war had broken out. The next year matters grew worse by a breach with France. Buckingham had a grudge against Henrietta Maria, and he tried to revenge himself by overbearing conduct towards Louis, and towards the French followers who had come to England with the queen. In spite of the marriage alliance with France, Buckingham persuaded Charles to take up the cause of the Huguenots, and in 1627 English troops landed at Rhé, an island not far from La Rochelle. The attempt failed hopelessly, but Buckingham doggedly refused to make terms. Before many weeks had passed he was back in England, having lost nearly four thousand men, and with nothing done. He was reproached on all sides. The people were enraged at the bad management of the affair; Henrietta was angry at this breach of her marriage treaty, which had promised kindness towards Catholics; the Huguenots were bitterly disappointed at the failure of English help; the French king, supported by Richelieu, made a point of showing hostility to the country which had flouted his offers. These disasters made the Commons in despair. Many of them declared that Buckingham had urged on the war with France more out of spite towards Henrietta Maria than from any other motive. They abused him roundly, without any attempt at polite speaking, saying bitterly that the state of the country did not allow of foreign enterprises, and that his foolish conduct was at the root of all these misfortunes. From this they went on to protest that it was monstrous he should be the chief guide of the king upon matters of national importance.

But gentlemen in the House of Commons might rage and fume as they liked, Charles paid little heed to their indignation. In *his* eyes "Steenie" was as adorable as ever he

had been. Wentworth, who as yet was a leader of the party opposed to the king, made a great effort to ruin the favourite. Buckingham repaid him with baleful glances. He understood quite well that Wentworth's real aim was to edge himself into Court favour, and he knew how to keep at bay a rival with ambitions as keen as any he himself had ever nursed. Nevertheless he was more anxious than he cared to show. Every day the Commons demanded his impeachment with greater warmth; till at last the king was faced with the alternatives of sacrificing his favourite, or of signing the Petition of Right. He chose what seemed to him the lesser evil, and in 1628 the great Bill became law.

But though Buckingham had been spared for the minute, all was not well. His friends pointed out the risk of assassination, and advised him to wear a coat of mail beneath his jacket. He tossed the idea aside lightly, for he had at least the virtue of courage, and he went about with his old careless bravado. No anxiety was written on his smooth brow; no fear gleamed unawares from his bold glance. He answered every man's glance with a stare, and passed on his way with a firm, haughty tread.

Two expeditions to France had failed, and the country was full of dissatisfaction. In spite of everything, Buckingham in 1628 cheerfully urged a third attempt. His reputation had suffered through the failure of the attack upon Rhé, and he now hoped to win back his fame. He determined to lead the troops in person, and he spared no pains over the preparations. But he was doomed never to go. For just as he was about to embark a hidden foe sprang upon him, and in a moment he was stabbed to the heart. "The villain hath killed me," he cried, and then he fell back dead.

Charles was bitterly affected by the news, and even the nation, hating Buckingham as it did, was horrified by the crime. Felton, the man who had committed the deed, was the most unmoved. He declared he had acted as a patriot, with intent to save the country from the harmful influence of an upstart. He confessed no regret at his action, and he showed no fear when the sentence of death was passed upon him. In a mood of exultation he passed to the scaffold to pay for his crime.

Now that Buckingham was dead it became clear how tremendous his hold upon the king had been. Had he been a wise and disinterested statesman he might have been one of the greatest figures in history. But he had no large motives, no great endeavours. His chief ambition was to reap advantage for himself, and he cared neither for king nor country, when the question of gain was at stake. He was naturally clever and acute. But he used his gifts for his own ends. No one could hold him back from embarking upon a course, however wilful and disastrous for the nation, if once he had made up his mind to take it. His frankness and his generosity would have brought him many friends, had not these qualities been spoiled by the lack of scruples. He was generous but unjust ; kind but selfish. Amongst many sordid characteristics, his courage shines out like a jewel. Fop and courtier though he were, no man living had power to daunt his heart. With many possibilities and splendid natural gifts he might have done so much. But he did so little.

SIR JOHN ELIOT

"But indeed, Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct."

CARLYLE

THE fresh air of April, blowing over the county of Cornwall, swept down a little creek on the rocky banks of which rose the fishing-village of Port Eliot. It was the year 1590. Elizabeth was on the throne, and England was still exulting in the glory she had won by the great Armada defeat. Here, on the 20th of the month, and in the home of a Cornish squire, a child, John Eliot, had just been born.

Eliot thus sprang from a part of England that prided itself upon its patriotism. This south-west corner of Devonshire, Dorset and Cornwall had cradled many an adventurous spirit. From here Hawkins had looked eagerly upon the dancing waters; both Raleigh and Humphrey Gilbert had called it "home." In the hearts of all three patriotism had burned brightly. And the child in Port Eliot, now looking upon the world with puzzled baby eyes, was destined to show a temper no less undaunted. He, too, was to win the name of patriot, defying even death for his country's sake.

The home at Port Eliot was an easy and indulgent one. Very few rules barred the way to boyish pleasure. Many a happy adventure was carried on amid the snug crevices of the rock-bound shore; many a wild game was played out in the lanes, and in all these Eliot had his part. Hot words sprang now and again, but anger could not last long in the stinging, healthy sea breezes.

At the age of seventeen he was sent to Oxford, entering Exeter College in 1607. His great natural abilities began to show themselves, but his zest for games and sport remained as keen as ever. Later in life he was driven into a more fettered way of living. He exchanged the fresh breezes and games which he loved, for the close and excited air of Parliament. But however absorbed he grew in the part he had to play in the hot, riotous drama that followed, he still kept his love for open-air sports. When misfortune fell upon him, and he was flung into the Tower, he spent many hours playing bowls, swinging dumb-bells, or spinning a top, till stricter custody robbed him of these pleasures, and made him lament the loss of "aer and exercise" and the close, unhealthy atmosphere of a "smoaky" room.

According to his own words, he had a place in the Parliament of 1614, by which time he was twenty-four and had already been married three years. In the House he saw more than one face which became famous in later history. There was Oliver Luke, with his proud, free carriage. There, too, were Pym, Dudley Digges, Hampden, and Thomas Wentworth,—all of them men of keen ability and in the first promise of their manhood. Among these young men Eliot soon found a footing, and before long he began to be noticed by some of the older and shrewder leaders of the party.

Affairs for the present went on smoothly, and in 1618 he was knighted. Next year he was made Vice-Admiral of Devon, in which connection he was brought into a long and exciting contest with a notorious pirate named Nutt. The robberies of this bold and reckless adventurer were a menace to the entire coast, and Eliot was for repaying him with a gibbet. His hastiness was bitterly attacked by his enemies. They took up the cause of Nutt, and with such effect that soon the man whom Eliot had described

as a "plunderer and an assassin" began to be spoken of as "that unlucky fellow, Captain Nutt." Eliot got the worst of the encounter, and Nutt was left free to carry on his piracy, which he did with such unscrupulous zest, that nine years later he openly joined foreign sea-rogues in defying English power, making himself "incomparably the greatest nuisance in His Majesty's dominions."

In 1623 Eliot made his first important speech in Parliament. Its style is characteristic of his political position throughout his life. He dwelt upon the rights and liberties of the subject, but he also spoke reverently of the sovereign. Almost to the last he kept his faith in the king, clinging to the excuse that the mistakes made by Charles were due to the influence of favourites. Even in the disastrous Parliament of 1628 he publicly pleaded for the monarch, saying he was sure it was some "misrepresentation to his Majesty" that had drawn his displeasure upon them. Yet it was on this same occasion (1628) that Eliot was startled, a few minutes later, by hearing the Speaker curtly interrupt him in a remark about Buckingham, on the ground that the king had strictly forbidden any unkind mention of that name. Amazed and indignant, Eliot gave way. But the interruption was stored up in the memories of those present as an ominous sign.

From the beginning of his reign Charles had irritated the Commons by his peremptory manner, and only a trifle was needed to make them break into open discontent. Unhappily the removal of Parliament to Oxford in August 1625, because of an epidemic of plague, furnished this trifle. In their ruffled condition anything was enough to disturb the temper of the Commons, and they complained bitterly of the trouble to which they were put, so that "their travell on the waies, their danger in the inns . . . took all pleasure off the journey." Eliot's quick mind

however saw in the change another and greater danger. Some members might not trouble to go so far ; and the reforming party might meet with a defeat. He rose quickly and proposed that three days after the removal of the session the House should be called over, and censure passed "upon all such as shall then be absent." His prompt conduct was characteristic of the firm, eager spirit with which he always dealt with problems. Three years afterwards, when he was fighting for the Petition of Right, he displayed exactly the same qualities as now.

Meanwhile Buckingham's reputation was growing more and more evil. Eliot looked on with a purposeful eye, and in 1626, when the favourite was impeached, he made a bold and determined attack upon him. His motive was probably a desire to save the king, for he thoroughly realised that any attempt to get Charles to deal fairly was hopeless, so long as the dangerous courtier possessed his confidence. Eliot's words were therefore neither temperate nor veiled. He compared Buckingham to the most notorious of all bad favourites. He declared he was like Sejanus, and he bitterly upbraided him for wasting public money in personal finery and gew-gaws. The House listened intently ; starts of excitement every now and then showed the sensation the speech was making, but still Eliot's clear voice went on : "I observe a wonder," he said passionately, ". . . that this man, so notorious in ill, so dangerous in the State . . . has been able to subsist and keep a being. He broke those nerves and sinews of the land, the stores and treasures of the king. . . . Not only to satisfy himself, his own desires and avarice, but to satiate others with pride and luxury, he emptied those veins in which the kingdom's blood should run. . . . What vast treasures he has gotten, what infinite sums of money, and what a



Sir John Eliot
After an Engraving by W. Holl
Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

mass of lands . . . amounting to little less than the whole of the subsidies which the king has had within that time. . . . These are but collections of a short view used only as an epitome for the rest. There needs no search for it. It is too visible. His profuse expenses, his superfluous feasts, his magnificent buildings, his riots, his excesses, what are they but the visible evidences of an express exhausting of the State, a chronicle of the immensity of his waste of the revenues of the Crown? No wonder, then, our king is now in want, this man abounding so. And as long as he abounds, the king must still be wanting."

The startling boldness of this onslaught met with a swift punishment. It had been spoken on Wednesday, and on Thursday, before anyone knew properly what had happened, Eliot was hurried away to the Tower. The Commons were up in arms; the right of free speech had been cast aside, and they loudly refused to do any further business till their colleague should be released. In the midst of the uproar the Speaker came forward to suggest that matters should go on as usual. But the only reply was a vast shout of "No business till we are righted in our liberties." After this a sudden great silence fell. The House was very full, but for a long time no one spoke. Every face bore the same expression of dogged resistance. At last Sir Dudley Carleton entered, breathless with messages from the king. The sovereign threatened darkly that he might be forced to "use new counsels." No answer met the suggestion, upon which Sir Dudley proceeded to tell over the benefits of the English. He compared them with foreign nations, taxed to such an extent that they looked like "ghosts and not men, being nothing but skin and bones, with some thin cover to their nakedness . . . so that they cannot eat meat or wear good clothes, but they must pay and be taxed unto the king for it. This,"

finished Carleton, with dramatic slowness, "is a misery beyond expression, and that which *yet* we are free from."

His words broke the strain in the House, and produced an effect entirely opposite from the one he desired. A great guffaw went up, and men turned to make laughing remarks upon their clothes and their food. It was long before the speech was forgotten, or that men stopped talking about the skin and bones of the "poor foreigners." Full of intense annoyance Sir Dudley Carleton withdrew to report matters to the king. Eliot still remained in prison, but after a few days' hesitation Charles was forced to set him free, since "the House was never quiett." His reappearance among the Commons was hailed with loud cries of delight, for by now men had come to look upon him as the champion of public freedom. His release represented much more than a mere personal triumph. It set up a standard of fair play for every citizen. Up till now cases of injustice had not often met with any determined protest. It was to the interest of everyone belonging to the race that justice should be stable; that small offences should not meet with heavy punishment. Not more than a year or two before this, a young 'prentice boy, named John Stevens, had been hurried up to London on a charge of treasonable talk. For a year he had been left in prison unheard, and then sent to the Assizes, where he was sentenced to be "hanged, drawn and quartered." This terrible miscarriage of justice roused no particular remark at the time, and in the street songs of the moment Stevens was merely held up as an example to others to beware of sinning in a like manner :

*"O let me be example unto all,
That they may never in such mischief fall.
Children and 'prentices, old and young,
Serve God in hearte, and governe wel your tongue."*

It was injustice of this kind that Eliot was anxious to remedy, and his release was a distinct triumph for the cause of free speech. His return was almost the last event of this "great, warm, ruffling Parliament of 1625," for directly afterwards Charles again gave sharp orders for its dissolution.

Public attacks upon Eliot had failed so utterly, that his enemies now fell back upon secret attempts at his ruin. Spies dogged his movements ; his smallest public deed was inquired into. Out of all these tests he came with unsmirched character, for he had never sought to enrich himself at public expense, nor had he ever been party to any kind of trickery. But in 1627 Sir James Bagg, his most relentless and deadly enemy, wrote gleefully to the Duke of Buckingham that Eliot had been thrown into prison for refusing to pay a forced loan, and that there was at last some hope for his downfall. This spiteful hope, however, came to nothing, since the state of the country was fast becoming dangerous. Charles saw that a new Parliament was the only remedy, and he gave orders for reassembling the Commons. The elections were at once begun, and Eliot and his comrades were set free, though amongst the Court party there were some who made no secret of their opinion that such an act was "nothing less than the letting loose of so many hungry lions."

A great effort was made to keep him out of Parliament, but he had half the country at his heels, and he returned in triumph. Both sides met in a fighting mood. Charles resolved he would take a stronger note, and he said at once he would allow "no encroachment on his sovereignty or prerogative." As a safeguard the Commons drew up the Petition of Right. The king put them off without an answer, whereupon Eliot exclaimed bitterly : "We need no foes abroad. Time itself will ruin us." Hard upon

the Petition came the "Remonstrance," 1641, in which Eliot had a leading share. He was pressing home upon the sovereign, and yet at every point he found excuses for him. Again and again he repeated the need for keeping unstained the king's honour, "without which noe prince was great, hardly anie fortunat." To save Buckingham, Charles at last signed the Petition, but when the Commons relentlessly forced the Remonstrance upon him, disgust made him dissolve them. Next year a new House met. In the interval Buckingham had perished by an assassin's knife; but the temper of the king seemed unchanged. Eliot was in his place, his eagle eye sweeping round the assembly. A friend, scenting danger, had written him a line, warning him to be only "a looker on." He crumpled up the note with a smile. He had no sense of fear. In the rough and tumble of sport, or in the quick clash of swords, he might always be counted upon being found in the thick of the fray. "None," he said slowly, emphasising each short word, "None have gone about to break parliaments but in the end parliaments have broken them." His prophecy, no doubt, carried a memory of that other occasion in 1626 when Charles had peremptorily declared: "Parliaments are altogether in my power . . . and therefore, as I find the fruits of them to be good or evil, they are to continue or not to be." Each party stood with its challenge, ready for explosion at any moment. The old grievance about tonnage was brought forward. Eliot hotly denounced it. The Speaker struggled to dismiss the meeting; Eliot and others held him down by force. The door of the House was locked, and officers from the king hammered at the panels in vain. In spite of the din, the resolution was carried. Come what might, Parliament had publicly sworn its undying opposition to illegal taxes. The Speaker could now go.

The king heard of the tumult, and Eliot was hurried off to prison. Here the last scene in his life was played out. He refused to plead before any but the Commons, saying he had spoken as a public man, who could only be called to account by the members of the House. He was aware that to hold by this reply probably meant imprisonment for life, since Charles was unlikely to call another Parliament. But he accepted the position with the firmness which had always marked his behaviour at critical moments. Though he suffered much through petty annoyances, from the loss of exercise, and from confinement in a "smoaky" room, his cheerfulness never deserted him, nor did his peace of mind play him false. Consumption made grave ravages upon his frame, forcing him to plead with Charles for freedom to recover his health. "I humbly beseech your Majesty," he wrote, "that you will command your judges to set me at liberty, that for the recovery of my health I may take some fresh air." The king answered the appeal with a jeer, upon which the prisoner wrote again: "Sir, I am heartily sorry I have displeased your Majesty and . . . and do humbly beseech you once again, to set me at liberty, that, when I have recovered my health, I may return back to prison." This second appeal brought no happy reply, but Eliot was fast approaching the end of life. A fortnight later he died.

Charles refused permission for his burial at Port Eliot, and he was hastily interred in the Tower. But he needs no monument. He lives in history as a patriot who served his country without prejudice and without self-interest. Darker impulses may have moved some of the men with whose schemes he was associated, but Eliot emerges from all tests untarnished. Without malignity, and without any gross motive, he held to the principles he

believed right. Not even prison took from him his confidence in the cause of liberty. He looked for its triumph in the future. And when after much evil and bloodshed England at last found a settled constitution, Eliot's spirit had its reward.

JOHN HAMPDEN

*"Who is the happy warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright."*

WORDSWORTH

PATRIOT and friend. These two words express the character of John Hampden. In public places he seldom indulged in extravagant speech, and he was never a champion of lawlessness. But in the stormiest councils he had his place, and his calm, thoughtful words often broke like cooling spray upon the hot sayings of the more reckless. He believed in the saying, "Think before you speak." He was slow to speak; slow to wrath, yet never from reasons of cowardice or apathy. Towards his friends he betrayed deep warm feelings, and courteous serenity marked his bearing towards the most casual acquaintances, so that even Clarendon has recorded his "smoothness and complacency to all men." Everyone loved him; everyone revered him, except trucklers, scandalmongers, the mean-spirited, or the debauched. These, and all other worthless persons, quickly grew uncomfortable in his presence, feeling instinctively he was different from themselves.

His early days were spent in the leafy county of Buckinghamshire, whence he passed finally to Magdalen College, Oxford. A short period of study at the Inner Temple

made him ambitious to enter Parliament, and in 1621 he found himself a member of the House of Commons. His entry into public life attracted very little attention. He was a wealthy young squire from Buckingham, evidently conscientious and honest, but nothing that he did or said was of a kind to indicate any special ability. Under Charles he was returned to Parliament in 1625, with his reputation much what it had been before. So many other young men, clearly more brilliant and audacious than himself, were striving for a hearing, that Hampden had very little chance of self-assertion. But he was there in his place with strict regularity, looking on with grave, earnest eyes, in the depths of which rose now and again a light that spoke of hidden force. His desire to serve his country was no less keen than that of the quick-tongued Wentworth, or the hard-hitting Eliot, but his gifts were of the kind which shine best in service under orders, rather than in brilliant leadership.

Nevertheless before long his close attention to business made itself felt in the committees and councils upon which he served, till gradually it came to be held that few were his equals in dealing with matters that called for patient unravelling, or the exercise of discretion and tact. He was never hurried, and he never spoke upon mere impulse. Some of the Commoners, such as Wentworth, often gave way to flights of oratory in which they pressed forward schemes they were by no means prepared to face to the end. But with Hampden it was different. What he said he would do, he did ; and he never spoke without being ready to stand by his words afterwards. Before he rose to express an opinion his plan of conduct had been mapped out and surveyed from every possible standpoint. His hearers often disagreed with his views, but they always confessed the sincerity of

the speaker. He made an early display of this doggedness by his refusal to pay the forced loan of 1626, and in consequence he was thrown into prison in 1627. He was by no means the only sufferer. Rebels were many and obstinate. "Nay, sweetheart," wrote another prisoner, whose wife urged him to compromise, so that he might come and spend Christmas quietly at home: "Nay, sweetheart, it shall be thought that I prejudice the public cause, beginning to conforme, which none yet hath done, of all that have been committed, except two poor men, a butcher and another, and they hooted at like owles amongste their neighbours."

With opposition at such a pitch it was not good policy to keep prison doors closed too long, and presently Hampden among the rest gained his freedom.

His conduct was an indication of how he would act in the future, and when ship money began to be demanded from the inland counties in 1635 it is quite probable that the magistrates of the district took hasty council together, wondering what course they had better adopt towards a man of Hampden's heroic stamp. They rated him at twenty shillings, a trifling sum, which certainly was not in accordance with his wealth. Hallam finds an explanation by saying the amount was for a part of the estate only. Guizot considers those in authority were anxious not to stir up evil, and hoped that the smallness of the sum would keep Hampden from making any protest. Neither explanation is very satisfactory; and the case remains one of those puzzles for which it is hard to find a motive. But supposing Guizot is right; that the twenty shillings represented a sop, the magistrates who offered it soon fell in with disappointment. Hampden had made up his mind to make it a test case, and he steadily refused to pay a farthing of the sum. His resistance was based

on the point that the king, acting simply upon his own authority, had no right to decide whether or no the state of the country made it necessary that a tax for the navy should be levied upon inland counties. The country, moreover, was at peace at the moment. Everyone knew that the tax was nothing less than a general levy, to be used in whatever way the king might think fit, for "a spring and magazine that should have no bottom, and for an everlasting supply of all occasions." It was in the public interest that the point should be legally settled, and Hampden briefly declared himself willing to see the suit through. Twelve judges sat in conference, and the case dragged on at intervals for six months. It is to Hampden's credit that throughout the long and wearying processes he was never abusive nor violent. Even those watching sharply for any display of temper were forced to admit that he bore himself quietly and soberly. He persisted that it was as much to the interest of the king as to himself that the point should be once for all settled, and with quiet firmness he held to his plea. When the last stage of the proceedings arrived, it was evident that the case was going against him. But his serenity was as great as ever, and he listened quietly while the judges gave their opinion. Judge Berkeley said learnedly that he knew of "no king-yoking policy"; that he had never heard that *lex* was *rex*, but that it was most certain that "*rex* was *lex*." Judge Vernon declared briefly that in any case of necessity the king could legally do away with any law; and Attorney-General Banks added glibly that prerogative was inseparable from "the person of the kings of England," and that therefore the king could do no wrong. When the verdict was made known, it was found that seven out of twelve had decided in favour of the king. Hampden heard the news calmly. He had lost his suit.

It was no doubt the answer he had expected. He bowed to the wisdom of the judges, but he was as convinced as ever of the justice of his cause. Charles had followed the case closely. It had given him not a little uneasiness, but he breathed a sigh of relief at the verdict. He was even imprudent enough to make no secret of his delight that an open court had decided the right of a monarch to exercise arbitrary powers. But the feelings of the people were very different, and like Charles they made no attempt to hide them. They fell upon Hampden as a hero and a patriot, and the fact that five of the twelve judges had acquitted him gave them fresh courage. Every class had its own grievance to flaunt; the list of complaints against the king rapidly lengthened. "Discontent," says Guizot, "hitherto deficient in cohesion became unanimous; gentlemen, citizens, farmers, tradespeople, presbyterians, sectarians,—the whole nation felt itself wounded by this decision."

Before long Charles began to be aware that the triumph he had won was worthless. Hampden acquitted would have been a bad enough opponent, but Hampden defeated was nothing less than a conquering giant. The sentence pronounced by the servile judges was taken at its proper worth, and counted as insult added to injury. Hampden had been the spokesman of the nation, and as such he had been openly flouted. Henceforward the quarrel became a national matter, which the country determined to take in hand. If the judges could no longer be trusted to give honest verdicts, then it was clear that the king might do as he pleased. His next inclination might be of still more dangerous nature. A spirit of alarm seized upon the nation, and in several quarters plans were drawn up to be carried out in the case of emergency. For the time being Hampden found himself in the blaze

of publicity, and it would have been easy for him to gather together a party. But he made no effort to secure followers. He pursued his old simple habits, and quietly attended to his business. Nevertheless his trial made this much difference, that henceforward his career was watched with public interest. He began, too, to play a notable part in the councils of the more prominent reformers, bent upon forcing from the king a pledge of national liberty.

Hampden's rare gift for friendship met with many responses among the members of the House. Pym was his devoted admirer, and the relations between the two were warm and true to the last. In his own country he was greatly loved, and in the midst of the most harassing business he found time to keep up a gossiping correspondence with some of his old neighbours in Buckinghamshire. He took a leading part in the reforms undertaken by the Short Parliament in 1640, and the whole House felt the effect of his restrained and temperate speeches. Pym was bent upon sharp measures, and under his guidance the Grand Remonstrance was drawn up in 1641. Hampden followed Pym, and when the Bill was put to the vote it was found they had carried it by a small majority. In this lengthy document all the grievances against Charles were set out in full, and he was accused of maliciously "subverting the fundamental laws" of the country. The king was greatly enraged by it, but his courage rose to the moment. He impeached five of the members, Hampden among them, and when the charge was ignored, he resolved to go to the Commons and assert once for all that power of prerogative to which he clung with such fatal persistence. Such a bold step was nothing less than foolhardy. He went, and the sequel is well known. When he arrived at Westminster at the head of an armed throng he found

that the "five" were not there. The king's master-stroke was a dismal failure, and instead of commanding, he found himself thoroughly outwitted. His deed set the match to the passions of the country. There was no longer any talk of peace. The king began to inquire about foreign supplies; the Commons secured ammunition. Four thousand men from Buckinghamshire rode on horseback into London in support of Hampden's policy. Every man in the country began to take sides. War had long been skulking about as a shadow, but now it took bodily shape and came unblushingly into the open. At Chalgrove Field, in the summer of 1643, Hampden clashed against Prince Rupert, and was fatally hurt. He had been wounded in the shoulder, and he rode from the field, his head drooping, his fingers nerveless and weak. "He is certainly wounded," said a prisoner who noticed his altered bearing, and he called the attention of his fellows to the significant fact that Hampden was leaving before the battle was over, whereas he was usually the last to desert the scene of danger. Six days later the country heard with profound emotion that he had breathed his last. Scarcely a voice was found to utter anything against his name. The moderation of his speeches and the simplicity of his bearing had never given a loophole to malice, and his courage had been admired alike by friend and foe. His goodness had won the respect of a nation, quick at detecting self-seeking, and his death shook the foundation of the party to which he belonged. "Happy and but too rare fortune," says Guizot, "which thus fixed his name for ever on that height, whither the love and full confidence of his contemporaries had carried it, and perhaps saved his virtue, like his glory, from the rocks on which revolutions drive and wreck the noblest of their favourites."

THOMAS WENTWORTH, EARL OF STRAFFORD

" . . . If he did not faithfully insist for the common liberty of the subject to be preserved whole and entire, it was his desire that he might be set as a beacon on a hill for all men else to wonder at."

Speech by WENTWORTH in 1628

AMONGST the candidates returned to the "Addled" Parliament of 1614 was a young man from Yorkshire, bearing the name of Sir Thomas Wentworth. He sprang from a well-born northern family, and had been educated at the University of Cambridge. Twenty-one years of age, and already half conscious of a smouldering passion for power, he took his seat among the members of that varied and short-lived Parliament. Many of the Commons who were present upon Wentworth's first entry never again found a place in Westminster. But there were few who did not keep some impression of the tall young man, stooping a little at the neck, whose "cloudy" face was now and again lighted up by a sudden and piercing gleam shot from his dark eyes. Power and ambition were already stirring in Wentworth's breast, and he began to grope about for some means of self-expression. The form in which he was to hold influence hardly troubled him. He hungered after power, and he was ready to take up any course that would place it within his fingers. This desire of his sprang from no fine instincts ; and neither patriotism nor duty had a share in his programme, except as a means to an end. To his silent,



The Earl of Strafford

Van Dyck

Photo Emery Walker

deep-seated disgust, he found that his path to royal favour was at every corner deftly blocked by Buckingham, who saw at once that this was a rival of parts, easily capable of gaining too much favour with the sovereign. Conscious of the secret battle offered him by the "dog Steenie," Wentworth made up his mind to join the opposite party, and he quickly flung himself into the cause of the Parliament. His brilliant and passionate speeches soon made him the star of the little company, bound together in common defence of the threatened liberties of the subject. When he rose to give an opinion the whole House sat breathless with interest. Sir John Eliot's oratory was more even, but in brilliance and passion Wentworth easily outshone him. His openings were calm and temperate, but he soon became dazzled by his own eloquence, and lost himself in splendid and sparkling flashes. Power,—power of any kind,—was what he craved; at all costs he demanded it. Nevertheless there is no reason to suppose that his speeches at the moment held a double motive. His sincerity for the time being was absolutely pure, and if now and again one or two of the more keen-eyed and earnest among his comrades suspected that his passionate phrases about liberty were built upon rather insecure foundations, no one whispered such a suspicion abroad. It took little to raise his vehemence. In 1625, when there was a question as to the legality of the elections in the district for which he had been returned, he instantly braved Parliament, declaring he would make no reply except before the ordinary courts of law. This behaviour is a sign of his general character. He was determined to get what he wanted. By fair means, if it were possible; if not, by any high-handed measure that might offer a way.

He found just cause for an outbreak of haughty passion in the treatment he suffered in 1625. For as he sat in

court as a sheriff, discharging duties which for ten years had been in his hands, he was suddenly and curtly told that his office had been taken from him and given to a neighbour and rival. It was the doing of Buckingham, and Wentworth knew it. His anger at once took fire. "I could wish," he cried hotly, "they had forborne this service this time. . . . Nevertheless, since they will needs thus weakly breathe upon me a seeming disgrace in the public face of my country, I shall crave leave to wipe it away as openly, as easily."

With the same turbulence he flung himself into a defence of the privileges of the subject to reject taxes illegally forced by the king. "We must vindicate," he cried, "What? New things? No! Our ancient, lawful and vital liberties! We must reinforce the laws made by our ancestors. We must set such a stamp upon them as no licentious spirit shall dare hereafter to invade them." When Buckingham brought a royal letter, in which Charles took to himself great credit for allowing his Commons to discuss a monarch's prerogative, Wentworth sprang to his feet impetuously. "As if," he cried scornfully, "as if this House went about to pinch the king's prerogative."

But in spite of his acknowledged brilliance, he did not easily find the niche which he sought for himself. In the privacy of his own thoughts he gloomily acknowledged that while at Court he was foiled by Buckingham, in the Commons he was confronted by Eliot. For the "clashing and cudgellings" between these two able Commoners had now come to such a pitch that it had grown from "an emulation to an enmity." Already Wentworth was wearying of his devotion to the Parliament, and the Petition of Right was barely through before he was on the highroad to royal favour. His change of party

roused an outcry of surprise and contempt, but Wentworth himself felt very few qualms. "His patriotism," as Hallam says finely, "was a seed sown among thorns." Buckingham's death had removed the real obstacle to royal grace, and once the road was open, he who had often exhausted himself in spurning any infringement of hereditary liberties, made no scruple about pushing his way to the throne.

Even during Buckingham's time Charles had often noticed Wentworth graciously, and he now held out well-paid offices as a bait to keep by his side this capable, unscrupulous statesman. Wentworth was nothing loth. His passion for power was as strong as ever, and he readily confessed himself willing to do as Charles pleased. He was at once made a peer. Then soon after he became President of the Council of the North, and his breach with the Commons was glaringly complete. He took up his new office with rapture, not because of the benefits of wealth, for he was at least free from sordid considerations, but because it gave him the weapon he had long yearned to handle. Charles was like plaster in the hands of his adviser, and he readily fell in with the firm, rapid suggestions regarding the royal prerogative which Wentworth cleverly threw out. The first draught of power intoxicated him to further efforts, so that soon he was found asserting kingly authority as hotly as ever he had upheld public liberty. His old colleagues, shamed and angry at his easy desertion of their cause, did not spare him any hard words. But Wentworth cared very little for what the country was saying about him. Was he not tasting the delights of ruling? And what were a few frowns, a few sneers, or even a few open insults compared with the thrill of being in command? He thought indulgently about his old friends in the House. They

were patriots, perhaps, but he was a statesman. Honesty with them would find a front place in their code of honour. His own motto lay in a word—expediency. Surely it was better to be expedient, when it brought such vivid delights ?

His social prestige affected him very little. Men uncovered reverently at his approach. It pleased him, but it did not interest him greatly, save that it told him anew that he had at last become a master. Ireland had long been a centre of gloom and disaffection. In 1632 Wentworth cheerfully undertook its reform. His coming was noised abroad, and a dull shadow of foreboding crossed the Celtic minds of the islanders. They suspected evil times, but they did not know the depth of misery they were about to reach. Wentworth landed, and at once he set about carrying out his plan of "Thorough." At first the Irish looked on, angry and rebellious. But his harsh dealings speedily convinced them that they had met with a tyrant to whom scruples and mercy were alike unknown. They made what resistance they could ; then they submitted sourly and sullenly. Taken by surprise, no plan of action could be seized upon in a moment, but they meant to have their revenge. The Lord-Deputy might flatter himself that he controlled their actions, but he had not conquered their spirits. He little knew the depth of the hatred smouldering in their hearts, nor guessed how suddenly and how fiercely it would spring into flame.

Left to himself, Charles soon found himself faced with grave difficulties, and when Wentworth returned in 1639 he found excitement on the point of seething over. The country was clamouring for a Parliament ; the army was full of disaffection. In desperation the king summoned the Commons, and in 1640 Parliament met. The year before this the king had made Wentworth Earl of Strafford

and shown him many favours. But balanced against these royal gifts was the odium of an entire nation, and the knowledge that some day his tyranny might be called to account. Strafford began to be uneasy. He knew the Commons too well. He recalled some of his own hot speeches in the House, and he begged the king to let him go back to Ireland. If he kept out of sight it was possible he might be forgotten, but if he were there at hand, who could tell to what lengths their vengeance might go? But on this point Charles was selfishly blind. He declared "that Parliament should not touch one hair of his head," and he absolutely refused to let him leave the country. Strafford gave way uneasily. He felt the danger of the situation. Nor were his fears idle, for before the Commons had done more than take their seats, they impeached the detested minister. His trial was a memorable scene. Eighty peers sat in judgment upon him; the king and the queen watched from a curtained box. Lords and ladies thronged the gallery, and the floor was crowded with members of both Houses. Strafford made his own defence, and his old eloquence rose to its height. For fifteen days he pleaded his cause, reducing the audience to tears by his pathos. The Commons began to grow restless and uneasy, fearing the effect of his passionate speeches. They were determined that fine words should not let him escape punishment, and they hurriedly brought in a Bill of Attainder, condemning him to be beheaded. Charles was urged to sign the warrant. He refused. Had he not sworn that not a hair of Strafford's head should be injured? He would not be bullied by these butchers in Parliament. The rumour that the king intended to save his favourite was whispered in the city, and roused the people to madness. "Justice! Justice!" they shouted, passing in a never-ceasing procession past the House of

Commons, brandishing sticks and waving poles. The king was in agony. Honour forbade him to sign ; fear made him finger the pen. He consulted with his bishops. With one exception they urged him to sacrifice an individual rather than rouse the country. Then Strafford himself sent a letter : “ Sire,” he wrote, “ after a long and hard struggle, I have come to the only resolution befitting me ; all private interest should give way to the happiness of your sacred person and of the state. I entreat you to remove, by attending to this bill, the obstacle which prevents a happy concord between you and your subjects.”

This settled the matter. Charles signed the warrant, and news of the deed was sent to the prisoner. He received the message with some surprise, exclaiming : “ Put not your trust in princes.” Next day he was hurried to his fate. His passage thither was full of dignity. “ I can look death in the face,” he said quietly, and he went with firm step towards the scaffold.

The people looked on in gloomy silence. No pity was visible on their faces, and after the axe had fallen, many dashed off, shouting triumphantly : “ His head is off ; his head is off ! ” But there were others who went away more silently, forgetting for a moment the many tyrannies which had brought this man to the block, mindful only of the courage he had just shown.

EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON

*" 'Tis with our judgments as our watches, none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own."*

POPE

EDWARD HYDE, afterwards Earl of Clarendon, was born in 1609. His birth was thus not so far beyond Tudor days as to place him outside the reach of Tudor influence. All his life he showed a love for the good old days, when sovereign power had been linked to strong personality, and the nation had instinctively and reverently looked up to the monarch as to a supreme lawgiver. It is easy to figure Clarendon flourishing under Henry VIII. or Elizabeth; it is less easy to reconcile his fitness with the Stewart régime. A recent writer has explained it upon the ground that he was "an early sixteenth century figure strayed into the late seventeenth." So that his character can only be understood by judging it by Tudor standards, rather than by those applied to Pym, Cromwell, or Wentworth.

Wiltshire was the county in which his infant days were spent, but he was more properly of Cheshire origin. He passed with renown from Oxford to the Bar, becoming enrolled as a barrister of the Middle Temple when he was only twenty-four years of age. His fluency and his vivid powers of description were often remarked. No one could hear him make a public speech without feeling that here was a clever and picturesque pleader.

Like most of the young men of the period he was stirred with an enthusiasm for the principles of freedom, and in the Commons he took an active part in opposing the Crown. But the first heat of his ardour soon cooled down, and he found himself steadily growing more and more out of sympathy with his colleagues. The Root and Branch Bill of 1641 roused him to opposition, and the Grand Remonstrance found him bristling with indignation. So far he had mistaken his own character, imagining himself a democrat, whereas his real disposition was spun from an entirely different fibre.

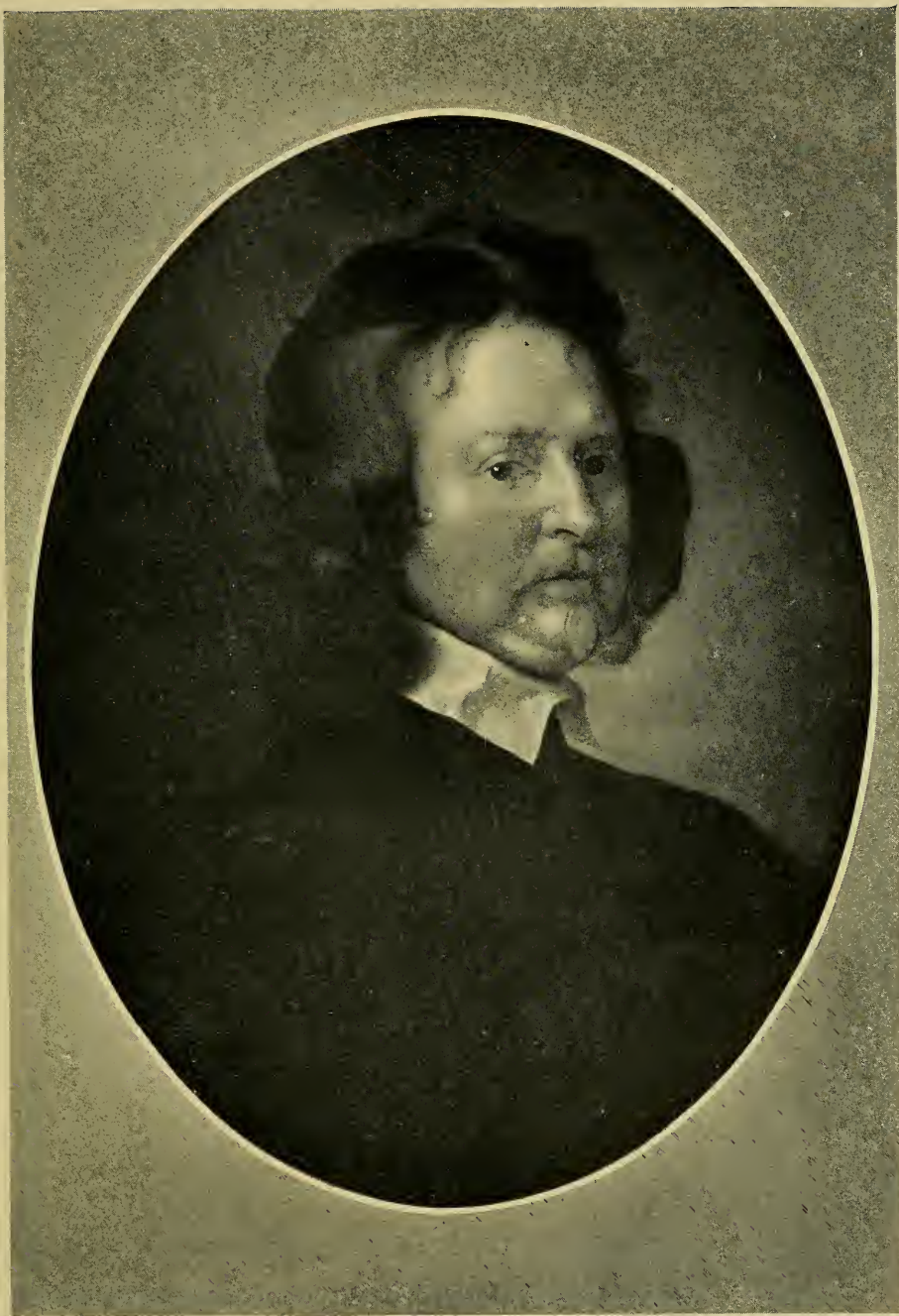
The Root and Branch Bill had startled him into a reconsideration of his plan of action, and it was probably with some sense of surprise that he suddenly realised how far he had drifted from the aims of the Parliamentary party, to which he had so far belonged. Perhaps he recalled that chance meeting with Oliver St John, close upon the sudden dissolution in 1640. St John's gloomy face was glowing with an unaccustomed eagerness; Hyde felt nervous and uneasy.

"What disturbs you?" said St John cheerily.

"That which disturbs many honest men," answered Hyde; "the so imprudent dissolution of so sensible and moderate a Parliament, which, in our present disorders, was the only one likely to apply a remedy."

"Ah well," said St John significantly, "before things get better they must get still worse; this Parliament would never have done what must be done."

For a long time this sentiment had been the general opinion of the uppermost party in the House, but Clarendon was just beginning to be aware how thoroughly he disliked it. In the following year he hotly opposed the Remonstrance, and when after a fierce debate it was carried by the narrow majority of eleven, he rose to protest against



The Earl of Clarendon

Gerard Soest

Photo Emery Walker

Hampden's suggestion that it should forthwith be printed and publicly circulated.

"In my opinion," he cried indignantly, "the doing so is not lawful, and would produce mischievous effects. If it be adopted, let me protest." His words stirred up a commotion. On all sides there were cries of "I protest, I protest," and in a moment the House was on the point of nothing less than a *mêlée*. But for Hampden's tact the situation would have ended in a hubbub. As it was, after two hours' uproar the Commoners separated, their faces hot and flushed, but their bearing quiet and orderly.

From this point it was obvious even to everybody that Hyde had no real place among those who opposed the King's party, and when he went over to the monarch most men felt it had long been his proper place. In his case, at least, there was never any trace of self-advancement as a motive. Naturally Charles was ready to receive his new ally, and willing to show him favour, but those who assert that Hyde's change of front sprang from any sordid hope, fatally misjudge his character. His behaviour secretly puzzled even the king. Charles had no insight into complex emotions, and he failed to understand that honesty lay at the back of Clarendon's conduct. But he received him with every show of heartiness, and soon gave him his confidence.

From this date the minister devoted himself entirely to the service of his sovereign. When active hostilities broke out he went with Charles to York. From there he wrote all the royal declarations, which the king laboriously copied out in his own handwriting, so that no one should guess their authorship. He gave the monarch sensible advice about the management of affairs, and often he strongly urged him to hold back from unconstitutional acts of government. Charles would listen in his usual

grave, courteous manner, but when the moment for action arose he straightway forgot his minister's wise warnings and plunged forward in his old, light-hearted, reckless way. Clarendon watching him from afar must often have suffered agonies of fear at the behaviour of his royal master. At such moments, too, he must have often felt the eyes of the Queen fixed upon him with gleeful look. For Henrietta Maria did not like Clarendon, and the minister was only too conscious of her feeling against him.

But before long the greatest crisis of all threatened, and personal likes and dislikes soon disappeared when the very throne seemed to be in jeopardy. For a time the king's party appeared to recover and to enjoy security, but in reality it was hopelessly broken. Prince Charles, a mere boy of fifteen, was given the high-sounding title of General and sent to the west of England to give loyalty a chance of expressing itself. With him went the faithful Clarendon, who followed him through every misfortune till 1646, when they both took refuge in Jersey, and from thence made their way to The Hague.

Afraid to return to England, Clarendon spent the hours in writing his "History," an immense piece of work, famous for its brilliant character sketches. Its historical value is less than its literary charm, for Clarendon had not the nice balance of mind which makes the historian; but otherwise the memoirs are invaluable, as a record of how a contemporary statesman viewed the conduct of the House of Stewart.

Very dark and gloomy were Clarendon's thoughts when he got news from England of tragedy following upon tragedy. The execution of Charles rightly thrilled him with horror, but his love for the sovereign so blinded his judgment that he summed up the character of the monarch in these words :

“He was, if ever any, the most worthy of the title of a Honest Man ; so great a lover of Justice that no temptation could dispose him to a wrongful action.”

With the Restoration palmy days again dawned for Clarendon. He returned in triumph as Chancellor, and the next year he received the title of Earl. Two objects now became the passion of his life—to restore monarchy to its old position, and to uphold Episcopacy. His youthful opinions about controlling the power of the king had long since been cast aside, but in matters of religion he had all his life been equally strong against both Roman Catholics and Nonconformists. He now fell upon the dissenting bodies with venomous zeal, and his name took on a shade of odium from the cruel laws, known as the “Clarendon Code,” for which he was mainly responsible. But it may be questioned whether his savage conduct sprang from a persecuting spirit, so much as from a detestation of every kind of schism. Papists and Puritans were alike branded in his mind as unworthy, and he blamed them both for disturbing the union of State and Church which he so ardently upheld. To a large extent his attitude was shared by the common people, who disliked the new sects as heartily as they hated the follower of Prelacy. Many street ballads aired popular feeling upon these two points, and “A Waking Vision,” though not published till after Clarendon’s fall, may be taken as an example of his own point of view.

*“Dread Sir, if you will Rule the Land in peace,
Expell your Foes, and Friends will soon increase,
Your Ruin does, Sir, too, too plain appear ;
Rome leads the van, Geneva brings the Rear:
If you’ll be safe, you must expell them both,
The Roman Gnat and the Dissenting Moth,
And vigourously let them understand
You are the King, and will like Kings command.”*

The struggle which Clarendon watched with such anxiety, seemed to him the old tug-of-war of the days of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, played anew. He did not grasp that in the meantime the background had altered ; that the nation had changed once and for all ; and that things could never again be as they had been before. These were facts that throughout his life he never saw. He could not move with the times ; and he did not realise that while he had been standing still, looking tenderly upon the past, the nation had rushed past him to a very different goal. Puzzled but dogged he still held to the old theories, hoping a vain hope of seeing the old régime spring into resurrection.

His rule as a statesman was distinguished by one signal virtue : he was a man of honourable dealing. When the Royalist Parliament of 1661 was more than half inclined to do away with the Bill of Indemnity, to which Charles had agreed at his accession, Clarendon at once denounced any such breach of faith. Through his efforts a strong message was sent to the Commons from Charles, declaring that the mercy promised in the Bill must at all costs be carried out. The more malicious grumbled and protested, but Clarendon held to his point, and the honour of the Crown was saved.

His fall came with the suddenness which is so often the fate of favourites. The king had grown tired of this minister with his tiresome scruples, and he was quite willing to let him fall into the hands of his enemies. Public opinion had vastly changed since Dryden's poem of 1662, in which the poet had fulsomely sung of Clarendon :

*" So, in this hemisphere our utmost view
Is only bounded by our King and you."¹²*

Extravagant charges were brought against him. It was said he was in favour of a standing army ; that he had

had a share in the sale of Dunkirk. He was, in fact, an official who could be blamed for any and every mistake of the reign. At the first noise of attack Clarendon consulted Charles. The king had nothing to say, and the minister awoke to the bitter fact that he was no longer needed. His pride shrivelled up like a spent balloon. Without waiting for his trial he retired to the Continent in 1667, there to live out the remaining seven years of his life, busy upon his "History of the Rebellion."

There was no real tenderness in Clarendon's character, though his personal likings were strong and true. So that he lacks the touch of charm which can often be found in less worthy natures. He was honourable, but he was cruel. He was faithful, but he had little sense of absolute justice. He was free from the taint of self-seeking, but he was never generous towards those who differed from him. He made very few friends, for he possessed the unfortunate knack of irritating men to whom he bore no ill-will. No party made him its idol; but every party had some ground of complaint against him. He served Charles II. truly and well, though the king used him ill. His character may best be summed up in the words of Pepys, who noted down in his diary the brief remark that the Chancellor had shown himself "a good servant to the king."

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

"Nor can a man any more live, whose desires are at an end, than he whose senses and imaginations are at a stand. Felicity is the continual progress of the desire from one object to another, the attaining of the former being still but the way to the latter—so that in the first place, I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death."

HOBBS

BIRTH placed Anthony Ashley Cooper in a position of wealth and importance. He might easily have spent his life in the common occupations of his class, hunting, dining, bullying or comforting his tenants, with a few rare jaunts to London, and one or two rarer excursions abroad. But very early the needle of ambition touched him, pricking him to new efforts in the chase after power. As a mere child he was left without the care and guidance of both his parents. This heavy misfortune, instead of filling him with a sense of helpless dependence upon strangers, made him extraordinarily self-reliant, and gave him, when only a boy, all the assurance of manhood. As a minor, and the heir to large estates, he had been put in the Court of Wards, where unscrupulous officials looked upon him as a plum to satisfy their greed. To their astonished dismay they found that the plum had prickles, and prickles that stung pretty deeply. The boy of thirteen had no idea of becoming the prey of money-hunters, and he made a warm appeal to the Attorney General. This characteristic move indicates

the general trend of Shaftesbury's later life. No one could ever put him down, without first overcoming every kind of resistance. He knew what he wanted to have, and he was thoroughly determined to get it. Delicate considerations, such as harassed the finely strung mind of a Montrose, never troubled his coarser nature. He desired power ; but it was the battle of obtaining it that he loved, rather than the quieter exercise of employing it. Dryden's lines, quoted so often, describe with great shrewdness the undercurrents of his character :

*“ A fiery soul, which working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er informed the tenement of clay:
A daring pilot in extremity,
Pleased with the danger when the waves went high,
He sought the storms ; but for a calm unfit
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.”*

The sound of battle, or the clash of tongues, found him springing to the front, eager to have full share in the joy of contest. Nothing lowered his exultation except the end of the struggle. With such a spirit to urge him onward he was a very chameleon in politics. He passed quickly from government to government, showing in his changes a good deal of self-seeking, and an entire lack of principle. Charles I. for a time held his service. But when the events of 1644 made it evident that the Royalists were fighting a dangerous cause, Shaftesbury crossed over to Cromwell's side, where he settled down among the Round-heads with a carelessness that was nothing less than astonishing. The death of the Protector, and the decisive conduct of Monck, brought him again to the Stewart cause, and from 1660 to 1679 he played an important part in the politics of the Restoration period. The

agitation over the Duke of York's succession gave him new opportunities for intrigue. He skilfully fanned the flame of Protestant alarm, and in 1680 he made plans for the elevation of Monmouth, scheming against the reigning sovereign with exactly the cool unconcern that he had shown in his devotion at different periods to Charles I., or Cromwell.

In all these passages into perfidy two good characteristics mark his doings. He was always tolerant towards religious opinion, and he never sought to make money at the expense of the public. Both traits shine all the brighter in contrast with the open corruption and intolerance of that unblushingly wanton period. With all his faults and vices, Shaftesbury may at least be written down as a man who could make up his mind and carry out his intentions to an end. Dryden has bitterly derided him for his share in the Roundhead party, "the loudest bagpipe of the squealing train." But scorn on the ground of disloyalty comes ill from Dryden, who himself passed through pretty much the same changes.

As a member of the famous Whig Cabal, Shaftesbury was in close touch with Charles II. The king found much to like in this clever minister, who was never at a loss for a witty reply, and in 1672 he made him Earl of Shaftesbury. At Court, Shaftesbury affected an air of idleness and profligacy, but his real temper was very different. Under his seeming indolence and well-bred indifference, he hid a keen and business-like mind. He had the gift of looking ahead, and long before an event took place he had scented out the likelihood of its happening. But in the matter of the Secret Treaty of Dover (1670) he was entirely deceived, and it was not till long after the paper had been signed by Charles that he began to suspect the double dealings of the sovereign. By this

treaty, Charles forswore the promises made by the Triple Alliance, and undertook to help Louis against Holland and Spain, upon receiving from the French sovereign money and men to help to restore Roman Catholicism in England. The effect of this discovery upon Shaftesbury's mind may be surmised. He would not shrink from the deed with the disgust of a less worldly statesman ; he would regard it coolly, and without embarrassment. Nevertheless, it must have given a shock even to his strong, unprincipled nature. Perhaps this disillusionment affords some clue to his exertions in 1680 on behalf of Monmouth, as a rival to the claims of the Duke of York, at a time when it seemed sheer madness to risk a rebellion on behalf of so hopeless a leader as the son of Lucy Walters. Popular sentiment found blunt expression in street song and ballad, and in spite of Shaftesbury's strongest efforts, Monmouth never had any real following in the country. The opinion of the nation had been much more shrewdly judged by the rhymster who wrote :

*“ Banish thy spurious son, the land,
Let him no more thy troops command ;
Withdraw thy fondness from the Fool,
Thy Darling, but the Party's tool.”*

In 1679 Shaftesbury took a leading part in the agitation for the passing of the Habeas Corpus Act. Directly afterwards he exhausted his eloquence on behalf of the Exclusion Bill, which aimed at keeping out the Duke of York from succession to the Throne. Public opinion was very divided on the subject, and Shaftesbury was both hotly denounced and hotly applauded. From one quarter every base adjective was hurled at his head ; from another came applause and a torrent of praise. In the stress of the commotion, the minister went about with a proud step

and a shining eye. Conflict was to him as the wine of life, and the greater the difficulties of the situation, the stronger grew the glow of his interest. The House of Commons was thronged with opponents; parties were openly and bitterly divided. "Whig" and "Tory" took on a fiercer meaning than they had so far known. Charles himself was so distracted, that in the intervals of feeding his ducks in the park, he pondered upon the wisdom of offering terms to his ministers. The elections opened amid the greatest excitement, and a man's political views suddenly became of vital importance. Blame and praise continued to pour upon Shaftesbury's head, and electioneering songs did not hesitate to refer to him, either by name, or by allusions too plain to be mistaken. A good instance of these songs is given in the Essex Ballad (1680). Shaftesbury's colour was green, and everyone knew the meaning of the reference in the second line :

*" Now God preserve our King and Queen,
From Pyebald Coats and Ribbons green,
Let neither Knave nor Fool be seen
about 'em."*²²

In spite of opposition, he was returned to office, and in October 1680 he was to be seen in the House of Lords, flinging down argument after argument in favour of the renowned Exclusion Bill. He was confronted by George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, who steadily and calmly pulled to pieces all his opponent's cleverest pleas. The battle between these two able men was fought to a finish, and to Shaftesbury's everlasting vexation he found himself outdone by the quiet reasonableness of Halifax. Haughty and disgusted, he flung himself from the hall. It was the turning-point in his career. Henceforward he was to descend steadily into the abyss of disgrace.



The Earl of Shaftesbury

J. Greenhill

Photo Emery Walker

As soon as he could find a decent reason for getting rid of his turbulent parliament, Charles issued an order for its dissolution. The reaction he had counted upon came quickly. Tory spirit triumphed, and Tories crowded upon the benches lately filled with Whigs. Shaftesbury's reputation began to dwindle with fatal rapidity. Exasperated citizens seized the opportunity for placing upon his shoulders the odium of maladministration, for which he had never been responsible. A clever, bitter ballad accusing him, quite unjustly, of a greed for money, flooded the streets and coffee-houses. His followers loudly denounced the slander, but the only reply they received was a taunting repetition of the chant :

*" Tony, a turncoat at Worcester, yet swore he'd maintain the King's Right :
But Tony did swagger and bluster, and never drew sword on his side."*

So the song goes on, till " old Rowley return'd heaven bless him,." Then the gibes fall faster than ever :

*" For now little Chancellor Tony with honour has feathered his wing ;
And carefully scraped up the money, but never a groat for the King :
But Tony's luck was confounded, the Duke soon smoaked him a Roundhead,
From head to heel Tony was sounded, and York put a spoke in his wheel."*

This very characteristic song shows the depth of hatred that even then poisoned politics, and also witnesses to the popular liking for Charles II., often affectionately called " old Rowley." One bit in the song was true enough, Tony's luck was certainly confounded. In 1681 a charge of high treason was brought against him. He was promptly hurried to the silence of the Tower, that ancient

building which at different times has harboured alike rich and poor ; the just and the unjust ; the innocent and the guilty ; some to pass forth free and unsullied ; others to leave their bones as relics within the sanctuary of the time-worn chapel. Four months later (November 1681) he was tried and acquitted. Bells and bonfires hailed the verdict, showing that in London at least " Tony " could still boast of some sort of a following.

On his release from prison some of his old boldness returned, and he went so far as to attempt to stir up a rebellion in the West on behalf of Monmouth. But his plans were found out and foiled, and there was nothing for him but flight. Foresight had always been a distinguishing trait of his intellect, and he realised at once that it was useless to try to pick up the broken fragments of his political career. He fled in haste to Holland, and here he lived for a year, till 1683, when death for ever put an end to those schemes within schemes, which his restless brain was never tired of weaving.

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX

"The sagacious Trimmer."—MACAULAY

BORN in 1633, in the reign of Charles I., the career of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, is identified with the most interesting portion of the Stewart rule. His death did not occur till midway in the reign of William III., so that during his life of some sixty odd years he saw many changes of government. With every advantage of wealth and position to help him, he rapidly became a foremost figure in the political world. His promotion did not bring him general popularity. Whigs and Tories alike found fault with a line of conduct which was always based upon personal decision, instead of party principle. "A Trimmer!" cried the Tory side scornfully. "A Trimmer!" echoed the Whigs with equal contempt. Their taunts left Halifax quite unmoved. "Yes, a Trimmer," he replied gravely, picking up the term so scornfully flung down. Henceforward he wore it as a feather in his cap, the proud badge of an unprejudiced mind. The action was characteristic. Halifax was a man with personality, and he was very little affected by the snubs and cold looks that Whigs and Tories in turn saw fit to bestow upon him. He had a "lawyer's mind"—fatal to success in politics. For he saw with embarrassing clearness both sides of every argument, and he often spoke most strongly against the very party with which he happened at the moment to be leagued. His instinct was

to shepherd the defeated ; and once a cause had been lost he at once began to discover its good points. He had a wonderful capacity for judging events from the standpoint of the future rather than of the present. So that more practical, but less clever statesmen, who were unable to follow his lengthy flights, were apt to listen impatiently to the many side issues he was wont to discover on his way to a conclusion. No wonder he roused exasperation in the breast of William III., so capable, so decisive, so utterly unable to understand the cross-currents in a character of a man who was a philosopher as well as a statesman. The witty and affable Charles II. had listened with delight to his mellow and eloquent flow, but the more brusque William, anxious to get to the point, did not hesitate to break in with a word of impatience.

“Halifax,” said an onlooker, “was publicly reprovved by the king for his prolonged indulgence in flights of fancy.” The rebuke cut the minister’s pride to the quick, bringing him down to earth with an unpleasant shock. Sovereign and subject were alike shut out by temperament from understanding each other. “To know all,” says the French proverb, “is to forgive all.” But this was just what William III. could never do in respect to Halifax. He put down as a conceited indulgence in wit, the series of minor arguments, that Halifax always discovered lying beside the main theme. He failed entirely to grasp the trend of a mind which saw both sides at once.

To Halifax there were flies in every ointment. “He could not,” says Macaulay, “long continue to act cordially with any body of men. The prejudices and the exaggerations of both the great parties in the State, in turn moved his scorn. He despised the mean acts and windy shouts of demagogues. He despised still more the doctrines of divine right and passive obedience. He smiled at

the bigotry of the Churchman, and at the narrowness of the Puritan. He was equally unable to comprehend how any man should object to Saints' days and surplices, and how any man should persecute any other man for objecting to them." This broadmindedness gives the key to his career. Some less scrupulous statesmen made a change in policy for the sake of paltry gain; but Halifax, never. He certainly swayed from side to side, but the reason for his change of front never sprang from a hope of self-advancement. He appeared to be inconsistent, but there was a method in all his doings, and he could always give a reason for the alteration in his views. The sharp shafts of his wit flashed through the House of Commons, and his speeches were always awaited with eagerness. Though both Whigs and Tories in turn scorned him, each party was wont to watch anxiously for his coming into the House on the day of an important measure, for who could predict his line of action, or foresee the arguments he would bring forth? Who dared to say whether or not the Bill would pass, until Halifax had spoken? To the politicians of the day he was what Drake had been to the Spaniards. "This Halifax" was capable of making a dangerously sudden swoop upon a point in discussion and carrying victory to a quarter where it was least expected. The rhymster of 1682, who wrote contemptuously of the Whigs, might have let his words stand for Halifax:

*"Yet they are 'Loyal Still' ! But ye must know
'Tis with a Mental Reservation though."*

This shrewd hit exactly describes the famous Trimmer. He had always a "mental reservation," which when revealed often bred dismay among the very party counting upon his support. Such a moment occurred in 1680 at the time of the Exclusion Bill. Almost to a man the

Whig House of Commons had voted it through. The next move lay with the Lords. King and country alike looked on with acute interest, and the Duke of York could hardly restrain his agony of mind. On the whole, the House of Lords was in accord with the Commons, and the Bill seemed on the point of becoming law when Halifax rose to speak. Every eye was bent upon him, every ear strained to catch his liquid utterances. Those most eager about the safe conduct of the Bill caught their breath in a fever of dread. What would Halifax say ?

The Trimmer began his speech. After the first few words it was evident that he meant to oppose the motion, and with a scarcely suppressed groan its supporters pulled themselves together to follow the lofty persuasions of the orator. Charles himself was present, looking on with a glowing eye. He was thinking not so much about his brother as about the effect of the debate upon his own position. He knew that a large part of the nation was still chafing against the Stewarts ; and that any moment fresh menaces might appear. But he comforted himself with the reflection that at any rate the people would prefer him to his brother, who was the butt of endless gibes :

*“ But with all his errors restore us our King,
If ever you hope in December for Spring ;
For tho’ all the world cannot show such another,
Yet we’d rather have him than his bigoted brother.”*

For a moment the king let his thoughts wander off to his own fortunes, then he came back with a start to the scene around him. The clear, mellow voice of Halifax was still filling the hall. He was using every art of persuasion in his power ; now forcing home some witty thrust, now taking on a note of pathos. He was pleading on behalf of the Duke of York, and before long Charles grasped

that his "bigoted brother" had found an able and powerful defender. Halifax went on speaking. A slight movement, the faintest of stirs, passed among the benches. The eloquence of the speaker was beginning to tell, and not a few of those peers who had come prepared to vote promptly and heartily for the Bill, began to wonder if there might not be something to be said on the other side. Still the speaker went on with his arguments, and gradually the temper of the House changed. Those whose hatred of the Duke was immovable began to gnash their teeth and cast baleful eyes at the dauntless orator. Up in the little gallery the glow in the eyes of the king deepened. Halifax sat down. Other speakers sprang to their feet. Protestations and arguments were wildly uttered. But nothing was of any further avail. Halifax had stormed the citadel. He had won. By a large majority the Exclusion Bill was thrown out. In the eyes of the nation Halifax the Trimmer stood as a rascal and evildoer. Many bitter taunts were hurled at his head; but it is significant that nobody dared to charge him with acting as he had done from secret sympathy with the Romanist party. He was commonly said to be an atheist, and as such he was branded in the eyes of both Catholics and Protestants.

This signal service on his behalf should have made James, Duke of York, for ever the grateful debtor to Halifax, but it did not. When he became sovereign, and he could show his real feelings more openly, though he offered his thanks to Halifax, he let it be known privately that he had no love for the "Trimmer." On his side, no doubt, Halifax did not expect gratitude. His speech had not been inspired by personal feeling for James, nor by private devotion to the Roman Catholic religion. It had been merely the expression of his view of justice.

He therefore showed no inconsistency in 1685, when

he brought all the power of his tongue to bear against the repeal of the Test Act and the Habeas Corpus Act. He saw no reason why James should not follow his private liking in religion, but he claimed for himself the same freedom. Trimmer though he was, Halifax would not follow some of his less scrupulous colleagues across the threshold to the celebration of Mass. Nor would he be silent when it seemed as if the king meant to try to introduce private prejudices into the conduct of public affairs. James attempted to wheedle his minister into agreement, but when he found Halifax still obstinate, he flung him from him with petty irritation and demanded of him his office. Halifax made no demur, James might dash him from power, but he could not wring from him a vote he did not think should be given. But in spite of his hasty conduct, James, at the bottom of his heart, was aware that he had no other minister so brilliant or so clear-sighted, and in the dark days which preceded the coronation of William, the hapless Stewart sovereign more than once appealed to him for advice.

James fled to France, and Halifax became the minister of William III. His career under the new sovereign was not very happy. The times called for swift and decisive action; William was a man of few words, and still fewer thanks. Halifax, moreover, was smarting under the sorrow of the death of two of his sons, and he was ill-fitted to bear the strain put upon him. Enemies began to raise their heads. He had been entrusted with the management of Ireland, and things there had gone very ill. His son made a spirited defence on his behalf: "My father," he cried, "has not deserved to be thus trifled with. If you think him culpable, say so. He will at once submit to your verdict. Dismission from Court has no terrors for him." The bold words struck home,

and Halifax was acquitted. But his career was practically over. Of his own free will he withdrew from the public life which his talents had so often lit up. His death happened with startling suddenness in 1695, at the moment when his son, Lord Eland, was being married to Lady Mary Finch. He died as he had lived, with a serene, unclouded temper, tolerant even in the face of the unforeseen and rapid onslaught of death.

SIDNEY, EARL GODOLPHIN

"Mrs TIMOROUS.—Well, I see you have a mind to go a-fooling too ; but take heed in time, and be wise ; while we are out of danger, we are out, but when we are in, we are in."

"The Pilgrim's Progress"

IN the year 1662, in the court of Charles II., a short, thin, dark youth might have been seen fulfilling the duties of page to his Majesty, the King. It was Sidney Godolphin, afterwards Earl of Godolphin, who thus early in life learned the wiles and arts of statecraft. He had little to say, and his nature was shy and shrinking. Few of the older statesmen paid him any attention. In the scramble for prizes which followed upon the Restoration, each man was too busy about his own interests to have any thoughts to spare for silent, eager-eyed youths, beginning a Court career. But beneath Godolphin's shy manner lay keen ability and not a little ambition. Court life was very much to his liking, and he meant to win a name for himself. At a very early age he had shown great skill in figures, and it was this gift that afterwards brought him to the front. Before the end of his life he was known throughout the country as the most able financier of his time. But in the year 1662 he was merely a page to the sovereign, with all his honours to win.

He had none of the qualities which bring rapid promotion. He was neither brilliant, nor had he the art of pushing himself into public notice. Nevertheless he steadily held to what was his, and by degrees he reached the full blaze of political life. Though he had outgrown some of the shyness of his youth, he was still timid and nervous,

and often enough he found the roses of office very prickly to handle. Whenever a catastrophe happened, or there was a difficult point to be settled, Godolphin was wrung by doubts and fears before he decided to act. And even when he did call together enough courage to make a decision, he was often so late in arriving at his conclusions, that the moment for striking had gone by. His allegiance to Charles lasted till the death of the monarch, under whom he became a baron in 1684. The opening of the reign of James II. found him a minister with an established reputation, and he was at once named Chamberlain to Queen Mary of Modena. The new queen, the daughter of a Spanish duke, was a Catholic. Godolphin was a Protestant, but it is typical of his character that he found no difficulty in accompanying his royal mistress to the Church she favoured. The rude shock of the Revolution found him full of anxious dread, but he loyally held to James, and he was one of the very last to withdraw from his service. His leaning towards the cause of the exiled Stewarts took the shape of secret correspondence with James Stewart, the Chevalier de St George, popularly known in England as the "Old Pretender." His schemes in this quarter never came to anything. There is good reason for thinking that his share in them at all was largely due to the influence of the strong-willed Marlborough, who was as ready to take firm action as Godolphin was eager to avoid it. For all this, Godolphin did not escape the scorn of his contemporaries. It might be prudent to hesitate and waver, but it did not command admiration. Dryden cleverly hit off the popular feeling when he wrote :

*" But Sunderland, Godolphin, Lord,
These will appear such chits in story,
'Twill turn all politics to jests,
To be repeated like John Dory,
When fiddlers sing at feasts."*

So far Godolphin's sympathies had been entirely with the Tory party, and in 1695 he was overthrown by the triumphant Whigs. But Whig victories were soon capped by Tory triumphs, and three years later he was back again in office. For the next few years these waves of political feeling passed regularly over the country, either party being on top in turn. The death of William III., and the accession of Anne, brought in the Tory side with a rush. Godolphin was in high favour, and the Whigs had to withdraw into the background. The elections had been marked by hot feeling, which was fostered by Marlborough's behaviour after the returns had been made known. The general was agog for war, but the Tories would not give supplies. It was plain that if campaigns were to be planned the Whigs would have to be brought back to power, and Marlborough now began to work hard to restore the very party he had always opposed. In this effort he was greatly helped by Godolphin, now united to him by marriage, for Godolphin's son had married Marlborough's daughter. Together the two ministers gradually persuaded Anne to give office to the war party, and by 1708 both of them were openly on the side of the Whigs. This change of front was uneasily watched by the country, and the ballad-makers sang :

" If Whigs at this distance so terrible are ;

Fa la la, la la la, la la la ;

Such men in our bosom may well make us stare,

Fa la la, la la la, la la la ;

Such men in our bosom may well make us stare,

And extort what they please if we do not take care,

Fa la la, la la la, la la la.²²

But Marlborough and the Whig party were now hand in glove, and Godolphin obediently followed. With great

flourish of trumpets the War of the Spanish Succession went forward, while the nation looked on and talked and wondered.

At no period in history have politics received more general attention than at the birth of our modern system during the reigns of William III. and of Anne. A man was marked out by his political opinions. Everyone was a statesman in little. Some of the coffee-houses were famous for their literary coteries, but even there men often talked of nothing but affairs of state. From his snug arm-chair in a coffee-house corner, many a wiseacre enjoyed the luxury of airing his opinions to his fellow. Not the slightest public event went by but Citizen Wise Man & Company had some remarks to offer. A typical ballad, written some twenty years before the accession of Anne, gives a good picture of the awakening of this new interest, which rose to its height after the Revolution of 1688.

*" 'T' the Coffee House here's one with a grave face,
When, after salute he hath taken his place,
His pipe being lighted, begins for to prate,
And wisely discovers the affairs of the State.*

*A politick citizen in his blew gown,
As gravely in shops he walks up and down,
Instead of attending the wares on his stall,
Is all day relating th' intrigues at Whitehall."*

It was unfortunate for one with Godolphin's temperament that there were so many voices to offer opinions. He would have found his career so much more simple, if he had been freed from the host of men, thrusting forward their different views, to the distraction of the timid Treasurer. His hesitating character was seen in its full weakness at the time of the storm in Scotland over the Union of 1707.

Many patriotic Scots were hotly against any formal tie between the sister kingdoms. At last Godolphin became so thoroughly harassed that he even agreed to the Bill of Security, brought in by the Scots, declaring that upon the death of Anne the northern country should have the right to separate its crown from that of England. At such a crisis it was very evident that he was not at all fitted for a diplomatic post. In his own department as financier he had no equal. Figures and estimates he could deal with. They, at least, were always the same. But men were a more perplexing problem, not to be settled by any mathematical process.

Marlborough was quite aware of this weakness in Godolphin's character, and in matters of any difficulty he took care to be near at hand. In return Godolphin leant heavily upon his counsel, and a close friendship sprang up between these two men, with such very unlike characters. Marlborough himself, with all his force, found it more and more difficult to pacify the growing objection to the war. By 1709, he began to feel himself beaten, while as for the storm-tossed Treasurer, he wrote, declaring: "I must give myself the vent of saying that the life of a slave in the galleys is Paradise in comparison with mine." Poor, harassed Godolphin! And yet he clung to office, willing to endure strain, fatigue, or the plentiful snubs of his royal mistress, anything, rather than see himself pushed out from Court. Then came the bombshell of Dr Sacheverell's sermon, in which the preacher referred more than once to "Volpone" or "the Fox." Everyone knew that this was the nickname of Godolphin, and naturally enough the Treasurer felt that he had been publicly insulted. The thought stung him to the quick and made him for once cast aside all prudence. He declared that Sacheverell ought to be impeached. Nothing less would satisfy him.



Earl Godolphin
Sir Godfrey Kneller
Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

His excitement became a passion, and he wearied everyone he met with his demands. In the end he carried the day, and the impeachment was set on foot. Godolphin was full of delight; he did not realise that by his protests he had given weight to an utterance that a wise man would have ignored. For the minute he had scored, but it was only for a moment. Very soon Sacheverell was the hero of the day, and with a leaden heart Godolphin understood too late that he had brought about his own undoing.

From this point his position with Anne became worse than ever, and in the following year (1710) the queen snatched at a flimsy excuse for dismissing him. The memory of friendly relations in the past rose in Anne's heart as she wrote the order. She recalled a hundred times when expressions of goodwill had passed between them. Marlborough and Godolphin had both stood high in her esteem, and she did not tear either of them from her councils without a struggle. Even now her generosity showed itself to the ex-Treasurer in the form of a pension of four thousand pounds a year. "It is impossible," she wrote, "for me to continue you any longer in my service. But I will give you a pension of £4000 a year; and I desire that instead of bringing the Staff to me, you will break it, which I believe will be easier for us both." This sudden dismissal must have come as a blow to Godolphin, but no doubt he also felt it a relief to withdraw at last from the perplexities of public life.

Marlborough's home at St Albans offered him welcome shelter, and here he died, two years later (1712) at the age of sixty-seven. His fame as a financier has justly survived him, but otherwise he had not enough warmth of personality to make his figure more than a dim shadow on the screen of history.

ROBERT SPENCER, SECOND EARL OF SUNDERLAND

*"They, after their headstrong manner, conclude that it is duty to rush on their journey all weathers, and I am for waiting for wind and tide . . . and for taking all advantages to secure my life and estate. They are for holding their notions though all other men be against them : but I am for religion . . . so far as the times and my safety will bear it."*²²

"The Pilgrim's Progress"²²

MACAULAY has summed up the character of Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, in the brief, cutting sentence that "in him the political immorality of the age was personified in the most lively manner." The verdict is sweeping, but investigation proves that it is not too sweeping for the unprincipled course, or courses of action, taken up by this powerful statesman.

Born in 1640, the son of wealthy and nobly-born parents, Sunderland's early career was typical of his class. Much of his early life was spent in France, and he came to Oxford bringing with him the pleasure-loving odour of the French Court. In 1665, at the age of twenty-five, he married Anne Digby, heiress to great riches, and as ambitious and scheming as her husband. Together the two young people set themselves to reach that position of wealth and renown which the one craved as restlessly as the other.

At a very early age Sunderland showed signs of precocity. He had the outlook of a man at a time when a healthy boy would have been thinking only of play.

The passing of years changed his precocity into craftiness, and he took his place in the political world as a statesman of great abilities and few scruples. He was cold-hearted and selfish, and above all he had the detestable vice of treachery. He could smile in the face of the man whom he was secretly undermining, and load with compliments the friend against whom he was poisoning the ear of the King. At first he had been received gladly by the ministers of Charles II. But one by one they discovered his native badness, and they began to hold aloof from a colleague who could stoop to the deepest deceit. The whole spirit of the Court was frivolous and false, but even among men who made a boast of owning no scruples, Sunderland was looked upon with dislike and suspicion, and the better-minded among them muttered that he was always to be found in dark practices.

His adroitness and ability won him the favour of successive sovereigns. It was a matter of small importance to him who might be on the throne, provided that he got a share of the "cakes and ale." Charles II., James II., or William III., he really did not care which he served. But the instant there was a suspicion of danger to himself he was in a panic of fear, ready to do anything, give anything, renounce anything, if he might escape with his life. Like a creature greedy for prey, suddenly startled by the approach of a larger foe, he fled at the first appearance of danger and hid in a corner. Many a time throughout his career the shock of ruin seemed to be upon him, when, at the last moment his wit found some means of escape. But in the last final burst of public wrath in 1697, the real nature of the man showed itself plainly. His only anxiety was to be rid of all his offices ; to hasten off anywhere, so long as he could keep a whole skin.

His political life under Charles II. offers some startling

contrasts. He began by upholding the king and his prerogative. But as soon as the nation showed signs of growing restless under a sovereign who "wholly abandoned all public affairs" Sunderland began to reshape his views. All day long he was busy finding out by cunning means which way things were tending, so that he could frame his conduct accordingly. A hint was enough for his sharp wit, and in the merest look he could read a whole story. By 1680 there was a general uneasiness in the country. The Duke of York was daily becoming more and more unpopular. Sunderland looked on and noted; asked questions, and drew conclusions. The Bill of Exclusion was about to be discussed. He believed that popular prejudices would triumph; that the Duke would be shut out from the succession. Everything seemed to justify him in going contrary to the king on this point, and he threw in his lot with the Exclusionist party. Then came the memorable debate in the House of Lords when Halifax carried the day. The Trimmer's eloquence infuriated the scheming Sunderland, and he went home full of rage and despair. In spite of his precautions, in spite of his most careful questionings, he was on the defeated side! He raged with ill-concealed anger, and when dismissal from office followed upon his action, he tasted the bitter woe of a mean nature, suddenly pulled up in its crafty enterprises. He saw that the only remedy was to withdraw his words, and he set about winning back his old place by flattery and submission. He apologised humbly to James, and soon he was back in favour with Charles, pursuing anew his deep-laid plans of self-interest. Unprincipled statesmen, such as Wolsey in the reign of Henry VIII., had often in some sort redeemed their vices by their able furtherance of public interest. But in the case of Sunderland it is safe to say that his thoughts began

and ended with himself. He cared nothing at all for the larger issues of statecraft, and he regarded every question of policy from the standpoint of personal gain. His wealth was already notorious, and in personal possessions he far outstripped anyone else. Yet the richer he got, the more he craved for gold, only to fling it, with strange contradiction of character, upon the loaded gaming-tables, round which a crowd of hawk-eyed courtiers always hung.

It was against favourites of fortune such as these that the satirical little ballad had been flung in 1675 :

*“ Let us drink and be merry, dance, joke and rejoyce,
With Claret and Sherry, Theorbo and voice,
The changeable world to our joy is unjust,
All treasure’s uncertain, then down with your dust,
In frolicks depose your pounds, shillings and pence,
For we shall be nothing a hundred years hence.”*

Scarcely had he wriggled himself back into royal favour when a new and perplexing question arose to harass him. James had succeeded Charles, and matters between the Episcopalians and the Roman Catholics were getting more and more strained. It was plain that matters were reaching a climax. Which side should he uphold ? This was the knotty question that stared him in the face night and day. Should he become a Roman Catholic, or should he not ? He had no religious scruples at stake. He simply looked upon the matter from the point of advantage. James was a Roman Catholic ; the minister who held the same faith might go far in his favour. He decided it was worth the risk, and in 1688, shortly before the seven bishops were brought to trial, he became a Papist. His action excited the liveliest interest.

“ Have you heard the news ? ” cried one, bursting into a coffee tavern. “ Sunderland has turned Roman Catholic.”

Instantly there was a buzz of excitement, and not a man was without his remark. It was the same everywhere. Every coterie had something to say about the matter, and gibes at the expense of the turncoat were bandied about in abundance. In view of the trial just about to take place, even the most charitable saw that Sunderland's change had been based upon the most sordid motives.

Everything added to the interest in the fate of the seven bishops, charged with defying the king, by refusing to read from their pulpits the Second Declaration of Indulgence (1688). James did his best to pack the jury, and he awaited the result with an easy mind. But no jury dared to brave the wrath of an entire nation, and the king found he had miscalculated his power.

"Not guilty." The words let loose a great shout of joy. The people heaped up bonfires, lighted candles, and rang bells. The whole city seemed a carnival, and the remotest country village had its share in the jubilation. But to the heart of one person at least the merrymakings were gall and ashes. Sunderland looked on with a clouded brow. After his change of faith was this to be the result? Had he been too hasty after all? He began to reflect whither the trial would lead. The throne was beginning to rock. Supposing James should be overthrown? Would the next sovereign be likely to regard with especial favour a man who had first voted for the Exclusion Bill, and then made amends by deserting the Protestant faith? The longer he thought, the deeper grew his gloom. It was truly an awkward situation for a man with Sunderland's outlook. He hastened to attract the notice of William of Orange by underhand and secret correspondence, carried on through the pen of his wife. The dangers that the crafty minister had foreseen followed fast upon the trial. The reign of James II. ended, and William III.

mounted the throne of England. Sunderland was at his elbow. He had hastily doffed his new faith, and returned to Episcopacy, and he was now as eager in the service of Protestant William as he had been profuse towards Catholic James. His old colleagues were naturally furious at the success which had attended his base dealings, and they showed their disgust as openly as they dared. The object of their dislike was quite unmoved. He had grown so used to changing his principles that he found no difficulty in the transaction. For years he had been used to public gibes. As far back as 1683 a newspaper had made sport of his affected speech and his pretended devotion to his sovereign :

“ And then my Lord Sunderland in his court tone (for which he was very particular, and in speaking had made it almost a fashion to distend the vocal letters), ‘ Whaat,’ said he, ‘ if his Maajesty taarn out faarty of us, may not he have faarty others to saarve him as well ? and whaat maatters who saarves his Maajesty, so laang as his Maajesty is saarved.’ ” This sounded very well in public, but no one was so dull as to suppose that Sunderland would be content to see himself shut out from public office. To him it was a vital matter *who* served the sovereign.

William III. had little time and less inclination to inquire into the niceties of character of the statesmen he found round the English throne. Sunderland was unquestionably a man of ability, and he had given ample proof of his foresight. In spite of popular prejudice, the new king saw no reason for shutting out a minister of proved skill. To the wrath of many honest men, Sunderland continued to mount in royal favour. By 1696 he had become so powerful that he persuaded the king to make a habit of choosing his ministers entirely from one party, instead of trying to please both at once, according to the old custom.

This plan was the beginning of our modern political system, by which the Cabinet is composed of the chief men amongst the party which has the largest majority in the House of Commons. The method thus begun has continued in use ever since, so that Sunderland stands in history as the father of latter-day English politics.

The next year William advanced him to the office of Lord Chamberlain, and he also made him one of the Lords Justices. A growl of protest foretold the approach of stronger opposition. He had been too long in the world of politics for his character to be unknown. Nobody trusted him; very few liked him. It began to be whispered that the Commons meant to bring in a Bill asking the king to dismiss him. Sunderland got scent of the danger, and instantly his cowardly nature showed itself. He tore off the badge of his office in terror, and like a frightened rabbit, scurried off into private life. No arguments could bring him to withdraw his resignation. He had seen the face of Danger, and its appearance terrified him.

His end came in 1702, and he died leaving the record of a statesman who had deliberately walked along crooked paths for the sake of personal ends.

Phase III—The Army

THOMAS, LORD FAIRFAX

: : : : *"One who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time."*

MILTON

THE life of Thomas Fairfax affords a specimen of the noblest type of soldier to be found among the troops on either side in the great Civil War.

In his general conduct he always showed high moral courage and lofty aims. His personal bravery was doubted by none. Though hampered by poor health, he was always ready to fling himself into any enterprise, no matter the hardships or danger involved. His soldiers loved him to the point of adoration; Charles himself more than once spoke warmly of him; and the Countess of Derby, a hot and outspoken Royalist, wrote down that though there were "various opinions about his intellect, there was no doubt about his courage, and that he was a man of his word."

By descent he belonged to an old Yorkshire family, proud of tracing back its origin to the early Middle Ages. His own birth took place in 1612, at the Yorkshire village of Denton. Aristocratic relations stood as godparents to him, and thus he grew up from babyhood to young manhood, the carefully tended child of a country squire. But for the outbreak of the Civil War, it is more than probable that he would have followed the career of his

forefathers, and lived and died in leisured quiet, well liked by his tenantry, but unknown to the larger world. From school he went to Cambridge in 1626, returning some four years later to take his leave as a volunteer for the troops in the Low Countries. His fighting spirit had been quickened early, and it was with a high step and a shining eye that he set off for excitements which the university could never give him. The glow of his spirit hid the weakness of his body, and the personal charm of his manner soon endeared him to his companions. One of his cousins, Lord Falconberg, writes warmly of him in the prim style of that day: "My cousin's sweet condition," he observes, "begets him love of all that know him, and his well-tempered spirit is inferior to none of his age and quality."

In the Low Countries, Fairfax joined the camp of Sir Horace Vere, where he gained a good deal of renown. When he came back to his Yorkshire home the villagers proudly pointed him out as a soldier from the siege of Bois-le-Duc, which had fallen before the English in 1630.

This foreign campaign brought with it another important event. For while Fairfax had been abroad he had grown into terms of close friendship with his general, Sir Horace Vere, and now in 1637 he married Anne, one of the younger daughters. The marriage was one of deep love on both sides, and throughout her husband's war career, Lady Fairfax, a "Vere of the fighting Veres," was almost always on the field with him, ready to encourage him with praise, or to give him those attentions which his delicate health made necessary.

Two quiet years went by, and then came the opening of 1639, when Charles sent hasty notice to all the country gentlemen of the north that he was on his way to Scotland to reduce the Covenanters. The king further earnestly

begged the support of such troops as his Yorkshire subjects could get together. The news was received with some dismay among the country squires, vastly more interested in their crops than in the politics of the time. They shrank moreover from warring upon the Scots, whom they regarded with the friendship of neighbours. With a strange foreboding, Sir Henry Slingsby noted in his diary: "It is, I say, a thing horrible that we should engage ourselves in war one with another, and with our venom gnaw and consume ourselves. . . . The cause of their grievance, as they pretend, is a matter of religion. Neither the one nor the other can expect to receive advantage by this war, where the remedy will prove worse than the disease."

The call to arms found a quick response in Fairfax. His fighting instincts leapt into life on the moment, and he eagerly drilled a band of dragoons, who were nicknamed the "Yorkshire Redcaps." Six weeks later the first part of the war was over; the Treaty of Berwick (1639) was made, and Fairfax returned home as "Sir" Thomas Fairfax.

These early adventures in warfare showed clearly enough that he had a gift for military service, and in 1642, when the die between the king and Parliament was cast, he readily prepared to lend his aid. Like many of his neighbours and friends, he believed that a single battle would bring matters to a close. He had no idea of the deadliness of the quarrel. For except for brief intervals of soldiering, he had lived a secluded life, and he knew little of how matters stood in London.

But though he spoke reverently of the king, his sympathies were strongly in favour of upholding the liberties of the subject, and with this view he accepted a commission as general on the Parliamentary side. His importance

dates from this year. The war was in every way one most likely to bring out a man's worst qualities as well as his best. But Fairfax steered his way with such simplicity and singleness of aim, that he soon became not only a trusted leader, but a powerful moral force among his men. His energy and enthusiasm roused the spark of adventure among everyone he met, and as the "Rider of the White Horse" his comings and goings were eagerly watched. The "white horse" soon gave place to a chestnut mare, which became famous on more than one field of battle. And when Charles II. made his triumphant entry into London at the Restoration he rode a splendid chestnut steed, given to him by Fairfax, and bred from the well-known mare.

The earnest hope of the Yorkshiremen that one contest would be enough to bring back peace to the kingdom was soon dashed to the ground. No part of the country was without its battle scene, and all England knew to its cost the horrors of a Civil War. In the north, Fairfax led his men with signal success, and the Battle of Marston Moor marked the climax of his success. His courageous spirit never flagged under the gigantic difficulties he had to encounter, though his sunny gaiety gradually gave place to a more reserved and graver temper. But if the stress of the times robbed him of his first youthful carelessness, it gave him deeper and more enduring qualities, and it never took from him that strain of honour which to the end adorned his career. In 1647, when he led Charles a captive to Holmby House in Northamptonshire, the king said significantly: "The general is a man of honour, he has kept his word with me."

This fine trait in his character was often a subject for comment among the other Parliamentary generals, some of whom had no such scruples. Therefore when Cornet

Joyce was sent with instructions from Ireton and Cromwell forcibly to remove Charles from Holmby House to Newmarket, although Fairfax was Commander-in-Chief of the whole army, he was kept in the dark about the matter till everything had been carried out. Not till the abduction was over did the news reach the general. He at once reproached his colleagues for the deed, and went in person to protest to the king that he had been in ignorance of it. Joyce was called in to support the statement. "I told the king," he said, "that I had no warrant from the general; I acted by order of the army."

With perplexities such as these to face, Fairfax might well grow grave and sombre. He was too sensitive not to feel his office a burden as well as an honour. Earlier in his career, in 1645, when the position of General-in-Chief had been offered to him, he had not wanted to accept it. "Had not," he says, "so great an authority [the Parliament] commanded my obedience, and had I not been urged by the persuasions of my nearest friends, I should have refused such a charge." Two years had passed since then. Meanwhile, the events had certainly been of a kind to put the best of generals to the test. To the end of the tragedy of the king's death, Fairfax struggled hard to maintain honourable dealings. He insisted that Charles should be allowed to see his children, and he wrote to the Commons, urging that the sovereign should receive kind usage, on the ground "that tender, equitable and moderate dealing, both towards his Majesty, his royal family, and his late party, is the most hopeful course to take away future feuds amongst ourselves and our posterity, and to procure a lasting place and agreement in this now distracted nation." The fortunes of Charles went from bad to worse, till the army made up its mind to cut matters short by shutting

out from Parliament all those members who were known to be favourable towards the king. It is more than probable that Fairfax was not told of this intended "purging" of the House, until it was over, on 6th December 1648. When the news reached him, however, he held to his colleagues, and instantly agreed to the action that had been taken by them. But though he still remained true to the side on which he served, his mind was full of dark perplexities at the critical turn which matters were taking. Yet he had neither subtlety nor foresight enough to think out any means of preventing the climax he dreaded. On the field, his duty was clear enough, and he did it heartily. But he was lost among the intrigues of Westminster, where his very simplicity made him the victim of men with sharper wits. He took his seat in the first assembly of the court appointed to try the king, but he never again presented himself. On a succeeding day, when the list of the commissioners was being read over, Lady Fairfax rose in the gallery at the mention of her husband's name, declaring hotly he was not there, and would never again sit among them. The remark made some stir, but it passed without further notice. Presently Charles was called upon to answer to the charges brought against him by the people of England. The words were hardly out of the Speaker's lips when the clear voice of a woman rang through the hall, saying slowly and distinctly: "It is a lie—not half the people. Where are they and their consents? Oliver Cromwell is a traitor." Everyone turned to look up at the gallery, and few were surprised to see that the interruption came again from Lady Fairfax, renowned as a woman of warm and impulsive speech.

Fairfax had now been in the field for seven years, during four of which he had held the high position of general-in-chief. His relations with Cromwell had always been of

a friendly nature, and the letters which passed between the two, show that Cromwell thought highly of the leader, to whose "better judgment" he declared himself willing to submit. But in the year 1650 a sudden breach arose, when Fairfax made it known that he wished to resign his command rather than fight against the Scots. He declared he would fight to the death, if the Scots should invade the country; but he objected to opening war upon a nation still linked to England by the terms of the Solemn League and Covenant. Cromwell begged and prayed that he would reconsider his action; politicians and soldiers urged him to take back his withdrawal. But he remained immovable, largely (so it has been said) through the influence of Lady Fairfax, who had shown herself a constant and eager supporter of the Presbyterians. Whether, in reality, his conduct was the outcome of the wishes of relations, or whether it sprang from personal feeling, it is now impossible to decide. But, whatever the cause, the general stood his ground resolutely, and in 1650 he withdrew from the army. Everyone deplored his action, and Mrs Hutchinson in her *Memoirs* stingingly records that hereby "he died to all his former glory, and became the monument of his own name, which every day wore out."

From this date till 1660, he lived a secluded and tranquil life at Nunappleton in Yorkshire. Then came news that Monck was marching to London to oppose Lambert and to secure a free Parliament. Ever since the death of Cromwell, Lambert, the major-general of the army, had been scheming to make himself Dictator. Almost before the withdrawal of Richard Cromwell from the Government, the "Rump," expelled in 1653, had re-assembled. Lambert at once asserted himself, and after dispersing a Royalist rising near Northwich in 1659, he returned to London and set up in the place of the frightened

Rump, a council, known as the Committee of Safety. His aim was to usurp the place which Oliver Cromwell had held and his ambition made him act with ill-advised haste. It was to check these plans that Monck now advanced southwards.

Fairfax was delighted at the tidings of Monck's approach. He had long seen with anxiety the supremacy which Lambert was winning for himself, and he declared himself ready to support any movement for securing a free Parliament. Quite suddenly he took the field, upon which so many of his old soldiers flocked to his side from Lambert, that the latter, finding himself deserted, took to flight. This prompt opposition to a new Dictatorship was an immense help to Monck, who was thus enabled to march onward with a solid body of troops. A petition in favour of a free Parliament was sent round, and Fairfax was the first to sign. He declared himself warmly in favour of any movement which would settle the nation in its ancient government, and at the same time preserve the freedom won by the Civil War. He welcomed the Restoration as heartily as he had taken sword against Charles I., and as sincerely as he had supported Cromwell. His quarrel against the king had been based solely upon a detestation of his tyranny. He had supported Cromwell because the Protector's rule brought with it settled government. But he now showed himself quite willing to swear loyalty to a sovereign who came offering the Declaration of Breda. His belief in Charles suffered a severe shock by the king's later behaviour towards the rebels, to whom he had promised safety. Many were sought out and punished, upon which Fairfax hotly declared that if anyone deserved to be a victim to indignities it was himself, "who was the general of the army at the time."

Natural ill-health, and the scars of battle, kept him

inactive in his latter days, so that for the last ten years of his life he was forced to pass away the time in reading and the other quiet occupations. He died in 1671. His noble and courageous life has been glorified by Milton in a fine sonnet, written at the time of the siege of Colchester (1648):

*“ Fairfax whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze,
And rumours loud that daunt remotest kings ;
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
Victory home, though new rebellions raise
Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent-wings.
O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,
(For what can war but endless war still breed ?)
Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And public faith cleared from the shameful brand
Of public fraud. In vain doth Valour bleed,
While Avarice and Rapine share the land.”*²²

JAMES GRAHAM, MARQUIS OF MONTROSE

*"After life's fitful fever he sleeps well ;
Treason has done his worst ; nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further."*

SHAKESPEARE

AMONG the many heroic figures adorning the reigns of the early Stewarts, there flashes the picturesque and attractive personality of the brave, unfortunate Marquis of Montrose. Against the sombre background of those tragic times he stands out sharply, his winsome and high-souled character gleaming the brighter against the dark records of his contemporary and opponent, Argyle.

He was born in 1612, in a home of wealth and refinement, amid the rugged scenery of Scotland. Here he spent his early years, a happy boy, riding, fencing, or playing at games. Often enough he would wander off for a lonely ramble among the familiar rocky heights, returning full of a poetic glow, roused by pondering upon the beauty of the world. His imagination must have been richly fed by these excursions into the wilderness of nature. He grew to love the white mists pouring down over the mountains ; the winds blowing among the trees ; the white surf curling up on the storm-driven waves of the lake. The thrill, half pleasure, and half pain, that Wordsworth afterwards magnificently expressed in *Tintern Abbey*, swayed the heart of this eager boy, clambering noisily

from height to height, or stopping now and again to draw in great draughts of the pure mountain air. In one of his poems at least, Montrose is the forerunner of the Lake Poet, in his love for nature :

*“ The misty mounts, the smoking lake,
The rock’s resounding echo,
The whistling winds, the woods that shake
Shall all with me sing heigho.”*

School days were followed by college life at St Andrews, and here he soon fell in love with Magdalene Carnegie, daughter of Lord Carnegie of Kinnaird. Montrose was only about seventeen at the time, but the death of his father some years ago had already given him the title Earl of Montrose, and there seemed no objection to the match. For three years he lived very happily with his bride at Kinnaird Castle, then bidding her good-bye he set out upon the round of Continental travel, which every well-born young man of the time thought a necessary finish to his education. In 1636 he came back, full of zest and eagerness. He was twenty-four, just at the crisis of his life, ready to be influenced by any powerful mind with whom he might come into contact. To the Court of Charles he went, with his quick, eager enthusiasms. Charles gave him a cold reception, and Montrose, who was quick to feel a rebuff, at once drew back, the high flame of his ardour suddenly grown chill. From London he went to Scotland, still eager for some great undertaking, still full of a blind longing to spend himself upon any heroic enterprise. The Covenanters quickly saw him to be a man of ability, and they threw out baits. After some hesitation he joined them, though even after his admission to their ranks the Covenanting leaders confessed among themselves that “ he was very hard to guide.” For already Montrose showed a dislike for party spirit. He detested

any deed that had self-interest as its motive, and he may fairly be reckoned as one of the very few who truly followed the light of conscience.

As a Covenanter, he was a daring and able leader, and in 1639 he captured Aberdeen. Upon this occasion each of his men wore a piece of blue ribbon, which was nicknamed "Montrose's whimsie." Later on these blue favours became the colours of the Covenanters, and as such found a place in many a military chorus or popular ballad, perhaps even inspiring such ditties as the well-known :

*" Oh dear, what can the matter be
Johnny's so long at the fair ;
He promised to bring me a bunch of blue ribbons,
To tie up my bonny brown hair."*

It is easy to picture him, slim, eager-eyed, and carefully dressed, riding at the head of his dour, blue-ribboned followers into the grey old town of Aberdeen. The soldiers were full of a lust for vengeance, and they made no secret of their desire to see the town receiving "its just deserving." But the leader held them back. Battle was lawful when aggravation had been given, but he would have no share in cruelty and pillage. Very sharply he gave orders, by which lives and property were saved. Perhaps this was one of the occasions he had in mind, years later, when as a captive at Edinburgh, he made his last proud assertion : "I dare here avow in the presence of God, that never a hair of Scotsman's head that I could save fell to the ground. . . . Never was any man's blood spilt, but in battle ; and even then many thousand lives have I preserved."

Hard upon the skirmish at Aberdeen came overtures from Charles. With his usual frankness, Montrose told his colleagues about the matter. Then he wrote to

Charles, and declined the invitation to London, on the plea that affairs in Scotland were still very unsettled. Even the most suspicious and prejudiced among the Covenanting side could find nothing but praise for such straightforward dealing. "Do nobly, as my Lord Montrose," wrote one of these, "who, having received a letter from the King himself . . . nobly has resolved . . . not to go to Court at all."

Nevertheless, this incident was the turning point in his career, and henceforward it became more and more evident that there could be little real agreement between himself and his party. Argyle and he began to come into open collision, especially when the former argued that there could be no way of counteracting Monarchy "except by its immediate and violent overthrow." With more and more disgust, Montrose gradually realised that his antagonist's real aim was not so much the welfare of Scotland as the furthering of his own interests. He began to be on the alert, and soon he heard a rumour that Argyle meant to seize the position of a Dictator. Montrose was furious with indignation, and acting with his usual rashness, he drew up a "Bond" to overthrow Argyle's schemes. As a result of this movement, matters between Argyle and himself soon reached the point of a deadly feud. It is probable that the two men had never liked each other, but now their enmity was revealed in the boldest, most glaring fashion. Montrose came forward with a scheme for the welfare of the kingdom. He was bubbling over with enthusiasm, and childishly eager to explain his plans to everyone he met. For the time being, Argyle said very little. His cautious, unscrupulous character did not betray itself in rash undertakings. For the present he bided his time. But he had marked down his prey, and he was only waiting for the best moment to spring.

Montrose was cast off by the Covenanters as a backslider and a plotter against their authority. He talked of impeaching Argyle; he wrote hotly in favour of upholding the king's sovereignty, as the only means "able to reconcile questions among us." Luckless Montrose! At his earnest entreaty, Charles came in person to Scotland in 1641, and behold, all Scotland was in a ferment! Montrose had fondly imagined that a visit from his Majesty would set all matters right. He had forgotten to take into account that his relationship with the sovereign might look like treason in the eyes of the Covenanters, to whom he was still pledged. Argyle soon managed to have him thrown into prison. When Charles heard of his misfortune, he wrote at once, assuring the Scots that the sole reason for his journey to the country, had been "a perfect intention to satisfy my people in their religion and just liberties." He begged that Montrose might be released, and after as much delay as possible, Argyle reluctantly set him free. Once again Argyle had been baffled, but he still kept a baleful eye upon his rival. He was still biding his time.

From this point, Montrose found himself growing more and more in sympathy with Charles, and the outbreak of the Civil War found him a leader of Royalist troops. His gay, heroic spirit made him put out every effort for the king, and he flung himself into the struggle with all the unstinted ardour of a disciple, delighting to suffer for his master. His own much quoted verses vividly express the warmth of his temperament, and the singleness of his aim.

*"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That dare not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all."*

As he rode into battle he took with him the purest motives. Was he ever aware of the shufflings and treachery of Charles ? Or did he never catch sight of the blemishes in the character of his royal master ? The latter idea seems the more probable, for to the last he kept not only love but high reverence for the king he served so devotedly.

Then came the fateful month of May 1646, when Charles surrendered himself to the Scottish army, and declared himself ready to make terms with the Covenanters. The news filled Montrose with dismay, and he wrote impetuously to the sovereign : “ I must declare the horror I am in when I think of a treaty while your Majesty and they are in the field with two armies, unless they disband and submit themselves entirely to your Majesty’s pardon and goodness.” Charles replied in affectionate terms, desiring Montrose to give up his sword, disband his troops, and go over to France to take his orders from Henrietta Maria. With Montrose to hear was to obey, and he faithfully observed the command. After some mischances he reached the French coast, only to find he had been forestalled in the favour of Queen Henrietta, so that his pleadings for a speedy effort on behalf of Charles were in vain. Then came the bitter tidings of the execution early in 1649, and at once he offered his services to the son. His grief at the death of Charles I., and his intention to fight for Charles II., are alike expressed in his well-known poem :

“ Great, good and just, could I but rate
My grief and thy too rigid fate,
I’d weep the world to such a strain
That it should deluge once again.
But since thy loud-tongued blood demands supplies
More from Briareus’ hands, than Argus’ eyes,
I’ll sing thy obsequies with trumpet sounds,
And write thy epitaph with blood and wounds.”

Upon Charles the Second's direct request, Montrose went back to Scotland in 1650, in the hope of raising a successful rebellion. But he went only to his doom. In his coming, Argyle saw an opportunity of satisfying his long-smothered hate. The expedition failed, Montrose was captured, and the exiled Charles basely threw off this most faithful follower of the Stewarts. Montrose quickly guessed the fate that awaited him. But he never lost courage, and when he was taken to Edinburgh to go through a semblance of a trial, he rode with a composed and happy air. A rabble had collected, to watch him go by on the rough-coated pony provided for his use. Some desperate women, robbed of their husbands in the war, had been hired to stone him. But his winsome, undaunted bearing made them draw back, muttering; and the stones were never flung. A few days went by between his trial and the execution of the sentence, and during the interval he took pains to order for himself a new suit of rich cloth, and all the little trifles of dress which he loved. Busy-bodies thrust their way into his prison, trying to force some confession from him. He begged to be left in peace, but his enemies were merciless. To one and all he made the same reply: "As for my coming in at this time, it was by his Majesty's command, in order to accelerate the treaty betwixt him and you. . . . I may justly say that never subject acted upon more honourable grounds, nor by so lawful a power as I did in this service. . . . I am very sorry any actions of mine have been offensive to the Church of Scotland, and I would with all my heart be reconciled with the same."

The 22nd of May dawned, and with exquisite care he put on the new garments he had ordered—a suit of black cloth, a scarlet coat reaching to his knee, a beaver hat with a silver band, and long white gloves. "More like

a bridegroom, than a felon," said an onlooker in the crowd, nudging his heavily-breathing neighbour.

Towards the Grassmarket went the procession, winding with subtle intention past the house of the Earl of Moray, where the glittering eyes of Argyle peered out from behind the half-closed blinds.

With complete self-control Montrose mounted the scaffold. Then he turned to make his last speech to the hostile crowds, watching in intense silence beneath him.

"I acknowledge nothing," he said firmly, "but fear God and honour the king. I do but follow the light of my conscience. . . . I have no more to say, but that I desire your charity and prayers." A few minutes more and his life was over. With a deep sigh the people turned away. For the most part they hated Montrose, but enemies though they were, they had been awed by the high serenity of one, whom a modern biographer has hailed as "the most accomplished Cavalier, the most humane Victor; the most constitutional Statesman, and the purest Patriot of his country and his times."

GEORGE MONCK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE

"No rash procedure will his actions stain."

DRYDEN

THE name of General Monck is so closely connected with the great historical event known as the Restoration, that he is sometimes spoken of as if the whole glory of the *coup d'état* of 1660 belongs to him. Certainly, he was the foremost figure in the movement, and the most powerful; but he directed public sentiment, rather than inspired it. Or perhaps, it would be truer still to say that his own actions were the result of a canny prudence, in which he took his clue from the popular feeling of the moment. There were many circumstances which helped towards the revival of monarchy. There was no second Cromwell on the horizon. The little handful of bullying Commoners, known as the Rump, had fallen into general contempt; everywhere there was a strong feeling in favour of a king. Above all, the army was hopelessly divided. Lambert's attempt at reaching the giddy heights which Cromwell had fearlessly scaled, had ended in a hasty downfall. Fairfax had made an open stand for a free Parliament, and scores of Lambert's men had gone over to the side of the old Yorkshire general. Monck had as yet made no public declaration. So far he had been watching events, counting and recounting his chances; determined to do something, but not quite certain which course it were best to follow. After a long interval of inaction, he made up his mind to move to London,



George Monck

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

and early in the year 1660 his memorable march was begun. His career before and after this event is of little interest. He had been born in 1608, and from boyhood he was a soldier. His general behaviour was always coloured by his military outlook. Even as a naval commander in 1666 he clung to the old land-phrases, and it was laughingly asserted that when he wanted the ship's course altered he would shout out: "Wheel to the left," to the intense secret amusement of the sailors, who good temperedly mimicked him in private. His military instincts were much keener than his political feelings. At the beginning of his career he had served on the side of Charles I. Then in 1644 he was captured by Fairfax at Nantwich and thrown into the Tower, from which he emerged some years later to take service in Ireland on behalf of the Commonwealth. Cromwell's brilliant soldiery soon roused his admiration, and he became enthusiastic about his new master. The general was not above flattery, and besides this he knew the full value of Monck's solid service. A warm friendship sprang up between the two, and to the last Monck served him faithfully. Upon the death of the Protector, Monck would have been content to serve the son as devotedly as he had served the father, had that son shown himself worthy of support. But Richard Cromwell was entirely without the genius of his parent, and the dawn of 1660 found Monck hesitating on which side to declare himself. He had no leaning towards fanaticism, and he despised sentiment. His own nature was unemotional. He knew how to deal with facts; but he dismissed with contempt the more mystical problems, tormenting some of the greatest minds of the day. He marched towards London, without giving any hint of his plans, beyond the declaration that he meant to be true and faithful to the cause of the Parliament. In spite of his frequent promises, the

Rump began to be uneasy. A huge troop was following the general. His earlier change of side had not been forgotten, and no doubt more than one guessed shrewdly that he would do the most prudent thing, rather than the most heroic. Clarendon, who might have been expected to view Monck's faults very kindly, writes bitterly about his conduct, declaring his words were such that "everybody promised himself that which he most wished."

Thus he continued his march to the capital, while from the Continent, Charles looked on, his breast stirred by a faint, very faint, hope of some good thing about to happen. With sudden tumult Monck's soldiers fell upon the gates of London and tore them from their sockets. Then they poured on in joyous rout through the narrow streets of the city. Within they found an excited people ready to load them with praise. The leader was at once surrounded by persons presenting addresses. Everyone begged him to give an expression of his views, but to all comers he kept the same stony silence. The city was strung with excitement, and the question of the general's next move was discussed in every coffee-house, and talked of at every street corner. The news ran that he had declared for a free Parliament, and at once London was beside itself with joy. On February 1660, the Rump was dissolved, "for joy whereof," writes Evelyn, "were many thousands of rumps roasted publicly in the streets at the bonfires, with ringing of bells and universal jubilee." The ever-ready rhymster seized on the event to launch yet another proof of his skill, and 'prentice boys went about humming joyfully the "Rump's Farewell."

*"And now let me venter this caveat to enter,
That neither for fear nor affection,
So much as a stump of that reprobate Rump,
Be ever had more in Election."*

But though Monck had got rid of the Rump, he had by no means declared his hand. The Presbyterians began to get restless; the Royalists were fast growing exasperated. More than once the general emphatically declared before the Commons that he was opposed to a scheme of Monarchy, but still he did nothing towards securing a Commonwealth. By-and-by it leaked out that for long he had been secretly corresponding with Charles, and it began to dawn on the nation that all this dallying had been nothing more than a means to gain time. By the delay he had successfully brought together a free Parliament; he had weakened the strength of the troops still faithful to Lambert; and he had given time for the nation's desire for the return of Charles to reach its height. The general's own men were prepared to support him in any plan he might choose, and he was already the idol of the capital. Very cautiously he veered round to the side of Charles, taking with him many of his men. "It may justly be said," observes Clarendon shrewdly, "and transmitted as a truth to Posterity, that there were very few men, who bore a part in these changes and giddy Revolutions, who had the least purpose or thought to contribute towards the King's Restoration—and nobody imagined a possibility of any composition without Blood."

A good deal of Monck's fame was lost in the two extraordinary months which passed between his march into the capital and the return of Charles. He hesitated so long that his name began to appear in lampoons. One hot pamphlet, written by a keen Royalist, declared that "whereas he was the common hopes of all men, he is now the common hatred of all men, as a traitor, more detestable than Oliver himself." On the other hand the Commons began to press him to sign a paper against monarchy. Monck pacified both parties with more or less vague

promises, but in the meantime the glory that had surrounded his name was beginning to tarnish. As late as the first week in April he openly said he had no leanings towards monarchy, declaring he would "shed his last drop of blood to maintain the contrary." Hard upon this came the Declaration of Breda (1660), followed by the Convention Parliament and the triumph and return of Charles. Monck's policy began to be clear. All along he had been scheming for a settled government, and when the monarch actually entered England, he was one of the first to greet him. The series of pretences through which he passed into this policy cannot be defended, except upon the ground that the result they brought about was the best for the nation. A revolution had taken place, but no blood had been shed ; and the country, so long the prey of factions and parties, gratefully agreed to any peaceful solution. Order had been restored ; that much at least was certain. Few stopped to remember the steps which had led up to it. Monck's double dealing was forgotten or excused, and for the moment, he was scarcely less adored than Charles. Whenever he stirred abroad, curious and admiring eyes followed him. His health was drunk in the taverns ; and his name was breathed as often, and with almost the same reverence as that of the sovereign. Dozens of ballads praising his action flooded the street :

*" My lord Monck's the man ! though his life's but a span,
He's improved that little so well,
That in true loyalty I can none espie
That can this great worthy excell."*

No epithet was too great to give him. He was "Hercules," "St George," and the "Guardian Angel of Monarchy." Men vied with each other in their praises,

and even the more satirical among them, laughingly cried :

*" I should never have thought that a Monck could have wrought,
Such a reformation so soon ;
That House, which of late was the joke of the State,
Will ere long be a House of Renown."*

One more ballad of the day, written as a dialogue between two passers-by, Tom and Dick, represents the eagerness with which the common people followed his movements. Monck is passing along the street ; Tom and Dick are both agog to see him :

TOM : *" Now would I give my life to see
This wondrous man of might."*

DICK : *" Dost see that jolly lad ? that's he,
I'll warrant him he's right."*

" Tom " takes a long look at Monck, and then exclaims warmly :

*" There's a true Trojan in his face ;
Observe him o'er and o'er."*

—to which " Dick " assents with equal emphasis :

*" Come, Tom, if ever George be base
Ne'er trust good fellow more."*

Rewards fell thick and fast upon the general who was looked upon as the prime cause of all the jubilation. Scarcely had the king landed when he made him a knight, and only a few months later he was raised to a baronetcy. From this distinction he succeeded to a dukedom, becoming henceforth known as the Duke of Albemarle. Charles had a personal liking for the silent, resourceful soldier, whose support gave him a comforting sense of

safety. He would very gladly have admitted him to his Council Chamber, but like other famous generals, Monck had no taste for politics. He had been too long accustomed to rule on the field to be able to bring himself into touch with the problems that harass a statesman, and he soon grew weary of the work. Affairs in Ireland for the time being gave him occupation, and in 1661 he was made Lord-lieutenant of that country. But here too, his energy presently flagged, and he gave way in favour of the Duke of Ormonde. After this, the flame of his renown burnt fitfully, sinking upon his retirement from Ireland, but blazing up anew after his courageous fight at sea against the Dutch in 1666. From sea enterprises he was called to London to help to stem the terrible damages caused by the Great Fire. Whole streets lay in ruins, and the bewildered city officials, worn out with anxiety and fatigue, rushed hither and thither, trying vainly to direct affairs.

“What can I do?” cried the Lord Mayor to Pepys, who hurried up to the scene, his eyes bright with excitement. “I am spent; people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses, but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it. I must have more soldiers; I have been up all night.”

Into this scene of dark disaster Monck entered, and soon his soldiers were hard at work. Some marched up and down the streets, keeping order among the rabble, who swarmed over the charred remains of timber, still warm and smouldering, in the hope of discovering treasure. Others bore off goods to safe quarters; others pulled down houses with the haste of desperation. Every citizen able to work, gave a helping hand, and the king himself laid aside his pleasures and worked as eagerly as the rest.

In the next year, Monck again held a civil post, becom-

ing for some months First Lord of the Treasury. But the burden of the office soon became wearisome to him, and he promptly retired. Henceforward his life was passed away from public notice, till the year 1670 when he died, being sixty-two years of age.

He lives in history chiefly for his share in the Restoration. As a general he was cautious and wary, always inclined to let others make the first leap. But he never hesitated to follow into danger, once he felt sure it was the best course to undertake. In his plans for action, he relied mainly upon his own conclusions, formed after personal thought. As a rule his own interests had weight in his schemes. He enjoyed the friendship of Fairfax, whose much finer character often sets Monck's conduct in an unfavourable light. The sinister shadow of self-interest dims Monck's glory, and he was certainly never stirred by the purer desires of a genuine patriot. But he was an able and powerful general, endeared to his soldiers by many a brave act; idolised by the nation to whom he had restored their "Mayflower" king. He has often been blamed for the double-minded part he played at the time of the king's return, but his dealings may be forgiven him because of the need of the moment. Against his doubtful schemes must be set the fact that he very greatly helped to restore a settled government in England, at a moment when a rash general might easily have flung the nation into another Civil War.

JOHN CHURCHILL, DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH

"But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the pyramids? Herostatus lives that burnt the temple of Diana, he is almost lost that built it. . . . Without the favour of the everlasting register, the first man had been as unknown as the last, and Methusalah's long life had been his only chronicle."

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

FEW men in their character present so many sharp contrasts as the great Duke of Marlborough. His brilliant career as a soldier is dimmed by deeds of duplicity; outrageous greed mars his great abilities, and he who could show himself tender and devoted, was also cruel and harsh. His faults and his virtues stand out with the sharpness of a study in black and white; and unfortunately for his reputation in history, the black dye is so deep that it casts a shadow over the lighter touches. There can be no question about his greatness as a leader, and yet, in spite of his magnificent achievements, his victories are often forgotten and his greed for money remembered. Those who desire to regard him as a hero should read his career as a three volume story, and the first and last volumes should never be opened. In the first of these would be found the record of his treachery under William III.; the last would treat of the exposure of his lust for gold; but the middle one would be filled with his military triumphs, in which he figures as a king among generals.



The Duke of Marlborough
J. Closterman

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

He was born in 1650, in the home of Sir Winston Churchill, a Devonshire Royalist, who had spent most of his fortune in the service of Charles I. Stories about the Stewarts, would be popular in the Cavalier household, and the vivid imagination of the boy must often have been stirred by anecdotes of the sovereign for whom his father had fought. He would be ten at the time of the Restoration, old enough to be excited by the event. No doubt he heard many tales of the marvellous entry of Charles II., and perhaps later on he acted out the scene as a game.

He was educated at St Paul's school, whence he became a page to the Duchess of Cleveland. He had no love for study, and to the end of his life he had a strong distaste for writing, though he spoke with the ease of a natural orator. To plan the capture of a fortress cost him much less pains than to write a despatch, and it was always with a sigh that he took up a pen to make a report. But he wrote often and willingly to his wife, Sarah Jennings, whom he adored with a passion that never grew less. To be away from her gave him the deepest pain, and when he set off on his ship for Holland he watched her lovingly through a telescope, till it was useless to look any longer. In every other matter he was changeable, but his love for his wife was steadfast and real. The Duchess of Marlborough had a sharp tongue. She could be fretful, overbearing, unreasonable, but throughout all her ill-humours the Duke remained as warmly and tenderly affectionate as ever. Battles could not ruffle his mind, nor upset his serene bearing, but an ill-natured word from her hurt him to the quick. "I can take pleasure in nothing so long as you continue uneasy and think me unkind," he wrote in 1709, just after the battle of Malplaquet. The horror of that terrible encounter left him cool and composed,

but a single fretful letter from the Duchess threw him into a restless and miserable frame of mind.

For the first eight years of the reign of Anne he passed quickly from one triumph to another. These successes he owed very largely to the influence of his wife with the queen. When Anne was still a princess, Sarah Jennings had been her maid-of-honour, and the two had become warm friends. Their characters were entirely different. Anne was slow, but affectionate and generous; Sarah Jennings was clever and lively, but thoroughly selfish. For many years Anne meekly endured to be led by her favourite, humouring her caprices and giving her endless and costly presents.

But the Duchess did much more than wheedle ornaments and money out of her royal mistress. She played upon the queen to let the Duke have his own way in political matters, so that no statesman of the day had more real hold upon the affairs of the country than the scolding, selfish favourite. Upon her advice, Anne abandoned her father, James II., at the time of the Revolution of 1688. Through her, too, the princess acknowledged William III. as king. Yet scarcely was William on the throne, before the unscrupulous tiring-woman began to stir up a party to champion the Princess Anne against imaginary grievances from William, and to secure for her from the Commons the granting of a huge income, quite apart from the control of the Crown. In all these schemes, Lady Marlborough was moved by a double desire. She wanted to humiliate William, and she was anxious to secure for Anne a sum large enough to admit of very generous slices coming her own way. In both plans she succeeded entirely. William never ceased to look upon her as a dangerous enemy, and from Anne's yearly income of fifty thousand pounds, she managed to

secure a substantial sum for herself. Besides this, she gave Marlborough invaluable help by bringing him all the latest tattle from Anne's private rooms. In all his plans she was at his elbow, eager to suggest and advise. But discretion had no part in her character, and when at last she fell from favour, it was through her own greed and insolence.

The death of William, and the accession of Anne, gave this ambitious pair the chance of their lifetime. Naturally enough William had not been inclined to favour a man whose faithfulness he suspected. So that though he had made the general Earl of Marlborough, and given him command of the English troops at Flanders in 1689, he had always kept a wary eye upon his conduct. His suspicions were fully justified. Marlborough repaid him basely. He made secret offers of service to James, and with a depth of even worse treachery, he betrayed the plans of the English army. Anne was aware of his double dealing, in which indeed she had had a share.

But when she came to the throne, even this knowledge of the general's character did not shake her confidence in him. She willingly placed in his hands, power, rank, and wealth. Huge sums of money were given him. He was made Commander-in-Chief of the forces; and at Court, his wife was even more indulged than she had been before. Towards the end of 1702, Marlborough crossed to Holland to take up his new office and carry on the War of the Spanish Succession. It was by no means an easy task, and many an able soldier might have shirked the undertaking; but Marlborough's handsome face showed never a care as he went lightly to his post. Yet he was already fifty-two years of age, and might well have been thought past the time when fresh responsibilities would be cheerfully accepted. Blenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706), and Oudenarde (1708), followed in the next few years,

and in each encounter the general showed the same courage and cool self-control. He was never flustered, never heated. The most crushing anxieties surrounded him, but he grappled with them all without betraying the slightest anxiety or worry. His serenity acted like a charm through the ranks. It became the fashion to preserve a careless, nonchalant air. The soldier who hurried or flurried felt ashamed when he heard stories of his general's composure. Feelings were held in check, and everyone strove to imitate the matchless ease of the Commander-in-Chief. Through the years of these triumphs, Marlborough passed through many caprices of fortune. The battle of Blenheim made him the idol of the nation, and a terror to the French. After Malplaquet, his name rang through the world. "*Malbrook s'en va en guerre*" (Marlborough is off to the war), sang the French peasant woman, with a shiver. England caught the words and echoed them proudly: "Our Marlborough's away to the war." But in spite of his great position, the general's fame was built upon shaky foundations. By-and-by it came home to the nation that the victories had only been won at the cost of many lives and enormous sums of money. Like an exasperated child they called for peace upon any terms, and they flung every term of reproach at the man they had a little while ago loaded with praise. The coffee-houses were full of groups of excited talkers, denouncing Marlborough; denouncing the war; denouncing the entire Whig policy. In the House of Commons the Tory section pulled itself together for a last great effort. It was hinted that Marlborough had used public money for his own purposes. The hint soon became an accusation, whispered softly at first among a daring few, but soon spoken of openly in every public haunt. Marlborough, they said, had mismanaged army

funds. He had enriched himself at the people's expense ; in fact he had robbed a helpless nation under cover of upholding its position abroad. Every day brought a fresh accusation against him from some new, sharp-tongued debater, ready with his words of denunciation and blame. Bitter gibes against him were bandied from lip to lip by people quite unable to judge the circumstances. Coarse and insulting lampoons were printed and offered for sale to passers-by only too ready to buy them. In a twinkling the general fell from glory to degradation.

The victim of this abuse was well aware of the feelings excited against him. Nevertheless, he maintained the same wonderful serenity which had always been one of his greatest charms. He appeared utterly unmoved, and never once did his dignity forsake him. But beneath all his coolness there was a sense of natural irritation at the bitterness of some of the printed attacks, and in one of his letters to the Duchess he confesses that the gibes "Stab me to the heart." He seems, indeed, to have felt these petty attacks more than the heavier charges brought against him by the Commons. The little, stinging verses could touch him when he could offer an unmoved face to his more serious opponents. On the strength of a foolish impulse he asked St John, his avowed political enemy, to use the power of censorship to forbid the further issue of malicious libels, thus laying himself open to the polite snub which St John readily gave him. In quite a different spirit he met his impeachment in 1711, replying to the charges of the Commons by a clear and dignified statement, which he had drawn up and written out for the purpose. In this he claimed that the sums of money, which it was said he had made upon the rations of the army, were always the "perquisite" of a general in the Low Countries. In reply to the remark that no other

English general had ever before received such a bonus, he retorted that no English general had ever before been Commander-in-Chief in the Low Countries. But in spite of the Duke's clever arguing, it is clear that in his career abroad he not only snatched at the usual means of enriching himself, but put himself to some pains to discover new sources to satisfy his greed. One modern historian of repute has done his best to clear Marlborough's name from this stain; but the general mass of evidence points to his lust for money. It was an extravagant age. Marlborough had long been accustomed to spend money lightly. What is more likely, than with every opportunity at enriching himself, he made use of the occasion without thinking about future consequences? His character was without the noble foundations which would have made such conduct impossible. The man who would play off sovereign against sovereign, deserting James for William, William for James, James for Anne, and all with the same composure, would never be over-scrupulous in the matter of public funds.

His impeachment gave his proud nature an unpleasant shock, but he never descended to beg for mercy. All he asked for was leave to go from England. Anne was anxious to do him this favour, but knowing the man, she wondered if she dare trust him to keep faith with her. The Court of the Pretender at St Germain's was still a source of anxiety to England, and the most kindly disposed person must have reflected, that once Marlborough reached the Continent, he might easily set in motion some fresh intrigue or other. In her uneasiness the queen told Bolingbroke her fears. He advised her to let the Duke go, on the ground that it was "no longer in his power to do harm to anyone." Anne had a generous spirit, and upon this advice she at once sent off the passport, and Marl-

The Duke of Marlborough 195

borough and the Duchess left the country. Their departure was a relief to the queen. For although she had long since broken with the pair, their absence from England removed all feeling of constraint.

Sharp taunts followed them as they turned from the shores of England. Swift, the satirist, let fly some of his bitterest verses to ding themselves unmercifully in the fallen general's ears :

*“ While he his utmost strength applied,
To swim against this popular tide,
The golden spoils flew off apace ;
Here fell a pension, there a place :
The torrent merciless imbibes
Commissions, perquisites and bribes ;
By their own weight sunk to the bottom ;
Much good may't do them that have caught 'em !
And Midas now neglected stands,
With asses' ears and dirty hands.”²¹*

With his removal from the army, Marlborough soon sank into insignificance. Apart from his supreme gifts as a general, he had no outstanding abilities. Moreover, he was past the prime of life, and the change in his position must have been a daily annoyance to him. It is true he lived till the year 1722, but during the last ten years he was only a shadow of his former self. His life may more truly be regarded as ending in 1712, when his career as a general ceased. So he passes from sight, a smiling, debonair figure ; faultlessly dressed ; tall and handsome ; his face serene and unmarked by the scars of emotion. In many respects he may be regarded as the typical figure of an age when great generals went to war with the etceteras of a dandy ; when the near approach of an enemy might find an admiral busy over choosing the perfume for his handkerchief. Yet beneath this display of carelessness

and frivolity lay a temper of steel. Men who dallied over the niceties of the toilet-table, stepped forward to meet the foe with a courage that bade defiance to the most terrible onslaught. And he who had spent time over the arrangement of his buckles, could endure hunger, fatigue, anxiety, annoyance, with the same smiling composure, the same gay, delusive bearing. Such a man was the great Duke of Marlborough, an embodiment of the most splendid valour and the most contemptible failings. Against his courage must be set his faithlessness ; and his marvellous lack of fear is balanced by his fondness for sordid gain. Truth and honour were qualities he neither valued nor possessed. But he could command an army with magnificent skill, and he was ready to exhaust every effort in wrenching a victory from the enemy. The weak spot in his character lies in his lack of scruples. As a soldier he was entirely without patriotism or conviction ; and he thought it no shame to be treacherous when treachery advanced his own ends. But he paid the penalty for his failings. His career, which should have lit up for ever the age in which he lived, is now remembered chiefly as an example of the mean dealings to which an unworthy general may stoop.

Phase IV—Religion

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

*“The mouse that always trusts to one poor hole,
Can never be a mouse of any soul.”*

POPE

GUIZOT once remarked of Laud that “order ever seemed to him justice.” It is an apt description. In all his dealing, order was the touchstone by which Laud tested everything, and he delighted in uniformity as heartily as Milton detested it.

Two qualities in particular brought him into royal notice. The one, a tireless industry; the other, a deep sincerity. By these he rose into power; by these he also fell into the hands of the executioner. For when industry became changed into the system of “Thorough,” and when sincerity passed into a passion for one form of worship only, a hectored nation, in a last desperate effort after freedom, snatched at him with ruthless, angry fingers.

He was born in 1573, when Elizabeth was still on the throne, and throughout his life he seemed to carry with him some faint suggestion of the atmosphere of the Elizabethan age. His life would have been much happier had it been passed under the strong, orderly rule of the great queen, rather than in the chaotic days of

King Charles I. Under any sovereign, he would have attracted attention, for he had many business-like qualities, such as industry, energy, and persistence, which are so often lacking in men of brilliance or genius.

No special advantages came to him by birth. He was the son of a cloth merchant in Reading, a man with money enough to give his son a comfortable home and a good education, but not able to command the ear of men with a place at Court.

He went to St John's College, Oxford, at seventeen, a serious, resolute youth, bent upon getting the utmost out of his studies. Zeal and energy such as his do not miss their reward, and in three years' time he had made himself so well known that he was chosen as a fellow of his college. This was the first step on the way to high office. He took it with a keen sense of delight, little foreseeing that it was also the first step towards an ignominious death.

In matters of religion, he believed absolutely in the truth of the Episcopalian system. But though he was narrow-minded to the degree of intolerance, he was fascinated by the study of religion in general. As an undergraduate he pored over books of theology, and his clear, piercing mind soon made him master of his subject. Had his sympathies been as broad as his wit was acute, his character would have followed very different lines. As it was, he grew more and more wishful to make all forms of religion obey the model of which he himself approved. But the times were against his plan. Elizabeth had been able to impose upon the nation the dictates of her imperious will. Yet even she had done so only through the exercise of much tact; and Laud had not the fortunate power of awakening men's love or confidence. Moreover, conditions had changed since then. A hundred new ideas in religion had taken root and were bearing



Archbishop Laud

Van Dyck

Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

blossom. New sects were daily springing up, and there was a general feeling of dislike for that "starched conformity," which some few years later Milton was to condemn in the cutting words of the *Areopagitica*. Was this the time to set out upon a campaign of making all men act alike? Surely there were enough signs to show the attempt would fail. Yet Laud cheerfully started off for the encounter, brandishing as his motto the word "Thorough."

His conduct may be explained upon one of two grounds. Either he was without ability to grasp the situation; or else he was inspired by sheer, dogged determination to carry through, in the teeth of everyone, a purpose he felt to be a mission. The latter conclusion is probably nearer the truth. For blind though he was in most matters of statecraft, Laud can hardly have failed to notice signs of disaffection, which must have been plain to all but the dullest. Probably he saw the dangers, and thought that they made the need for prompt action all the greater. So he went on his way, with the blundering persistence of a person, who has not caught sight of the chasm, yawning a few feet before him.

Meanwhile the Church was full of emotions; she was struggling for new expression. A hundred bewildering feelings pulled her this way and that; and in her confusion she made several false starts. These inner struggles were hidden from Laud, with his unemotional, unsubtle mind. He determined to drill the nation into an appearance of order, and upon his appointment as Bishop of London in 1628 he set to work with zest. The difficulties he met with, must often have made him gloomy; often, they must have given him a cold-water surprise. According to his way of thinking, all life was to be lived in straight lines. Intriguing and treachery were not only beneath the finer side of his nature, but quite outside his under-

standing. Thus he never foresaw the probable effect of his designs, and in 1640, when he heard the news of his own impeachment by the Long Parliament, the tidings burst upon him like a bombshell. He had been so busy over his schemes, that he had never stopped to think what might happen to himself. And besides, he was so entirely sure that his course was the truest and the best, that he utterly failed to see that it was possible others might think differently. His sensations on that dreadful day, when he found himself hurried off to prison, can be guessed at easily. An earthquake could not have astounded him more, nor found him more unprepared. Distressed, alarmed, confused, he accepted the situation with outward calm. But his mind must have been filled with more vital and sharp-set questions than had ever before entered his head.

Ever since 1615, when he had been made Archdeacon of Huntingdon, he had met with steady preferment in the Church. In 1616 he became Dean of Gloucester ; in 1621 he was made Bishop of St David's. Besides this he had already made himself known as a scholar and a man who could reason. Then came the accession of Charles I., and at once Laud's fortunes took a rapid step forward. The pleasant, kind-hearted king found a distinct sense of security in an adviser who always had a plan and an answer for everything, and soon a sense of friendship grew up between them. Yet their characters were oddly different. Charles had neither a strong sense of honour, nor very firm scruples. Laud, on the contrary, was a man of very keen principle, and even his most violent and high-handed deeds did not spring from mean or selfish motives. In carrying out his rigid programme he earned the hatred of the people. If he had won their gratitude, he would have been just as unmoved. Human emotions

were outside his range. It is more than likely that he realised neither the true nature of the fire of the opposition he provoked, nor the cruelty and heartlessness of many of his actions. But underneath all his narrow-thinking, all his intolerance and shortsightedness, lay a rock-bed of principle, and an honest desire to serve the Church. "I laboured," he confesses in one of his writings, "nothing more than that the external worship of God—too much slighted in most parts of this kingdom—might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be, being still of opinion that *unity* cannot long continue in the Church when *uniformity* is shut out at the doors." In this very characteristic sentence he showed his true aim. He was a man of peace; a man of order. Given order, he firmly believed that peace would follow, and he put all his strength into persuading the nation to form habits in religion. But it was vain to talk about habits, or to preach of rule, when the sound of discontent was already in the air, and when the Petition of Right was making even the most careless courtier aware that a crisis was to be expected.

With the gathering of the storm came further preferment for Laud. In 1628 Wentworth had deserted the reforming party and come over to the Court, where already he had great influence. It began to be forced home upon Charles that out of all his kingdom there were but two men upon whom he could rely with confidence in an extremity. One was Thomas Wentworth; the other, William Laud. In 1632 he made Wentworth Lord Deputy of Ireland, and in the next year Laud became Archbishop of Canterbury. Each man accepted his post with the resolve to carry out instant reforms. But the wisdom of Strafford was lacking in the Archbishop. So that while the Lord Deputy of Ireland won a fleeting supremacy by

his high-handed methods, Laud made a fatal blunder in attempting to deal in the same way with the Church in Scotland. He meant to secure the loyalty of Scotland for Charles; he did not see that his ill-advised despotism would end in almost wrecking not only the cause of the king, but the very Church that he served. Nevertheless for the present there was no open outburst. Four slow years went by, during which Laud ruled with a cruel hand, while the nation looked on with a sullen, smouldering hatred, that was none the less deep because it was unspoken. Every now and then there were attempts at resistance. But what man could hope to stand against an archbishop who could enforce his wishes by the hated and illegal Court of High Commission, which showed much despatch and no pity in dealing with its victims? The bolder spirits murmured and threatened. Instantly they found themselves thrust into the hard arms of the pillory, to find what consolation they could. William Prynne, an obstinate, narrow-minded man, but a person of courage, gained notoriety in this way in 1633. And when he stepped down from the platform, with mutilated ears, and wrenched limbs, he made in his mind a vow that he would spend his life in opposing Laud. The year 1637 found him again in the pillory, with the remaining stumps of his ears chopped off. Beneath him surged an angry, sympathetic crowd, heaping curses on Laud, and praying that the nation might be freed from his tyranny. Prynne was a revengeful man, and in 1644, when an opportunity came for sending Laud to the block, he strongly urged the deed. He had good cause for hatred, it is true, but nothing can excuse the malice which pushed into the executioner's hands an old man of seventy-one, who had already paid for his crimes by four years' imprisonment.

The murmurs over Prynne's punishment in 1637 might have been expected to act as a warning to the tyrannical archbishop. Yet it was in that very year that he began his disastrous campaign in Scotland. He issued a Liturgy of his own, supported by the king's authority, and this he tried to force upon the hostile Scottish nation. The Dean of St Giles stood up to read the new service, but his voice was drowned in an uproar. Men and women joined in a cry "Baal is in the Church," and the congregation became a wild mob. The Dean did his best to go on with the service, but he had little chance against the throng of thoroughly angry people. The day closed with riots and excitement, leaving each side equally determined to get the better of the other. Laud soon found he had done a dangerous thing in setting a whole nation in revolt. In the beginning of 1638, he heard with dismay that the National Covenant had been signed by thousands of Scots, pledged to "uphold the Kirk of Scotland and to uproot all traces of idolatry." Nevertheless, he hoped with Charles that a few soldiers would soon settle the matter. The "Bishops' War" proved otherwise. In 1639 the Scots proved their triumph in the Treaty of Berwick, and by 1640 their position was so strong that they were able to wrest from the king further advantages in the Treaty of Ripon.

The failure of the campaign in Scotland sounded the knell of Laud's doom. A month after the Treaty of Ripon the Long Parliament met. Laud was at once impeached. It was difficult to bring any exact charge against him, but he was accused of high treason, and attacked as "the root and ground of all our miseries." The accusation astonished him, and its wording gave him an entirely novel view of himself. He was aware that he had some enemies, but he had been so wrapt up in his schemes that he never imagined he could be described in so sweeping a

sentence. He remembered that the 'prentice boys had recently mobbed him in his palace at Lambeth ; but still he had not expected impeachment.

The full sense of the word came upon him with a sudden rush when the gates of the Tower closed upon him, leaving him to ponder over that sinister phrase, " the root and ground of all our miseries."

For four weary years he lay in prison, while England was racked with civil strife. From his prison window he saw his old friend, Strafford, go past to execution ; and in the silence of his cell he must have heard many sounds telling him of the confusion and excitement in the city. The battles of First Newbury and Marston Moor had been fought, and in 1645 the Presbyterians were urging terms of peace in the Treaty of Uxbridge. But there was another and more turbulent body to be dealt with, the extremists who set their face against any kind of truce. These, coming into power, took a hasty revenge upon the age-worn figure of Laud. Prynne was among his accusers, and past memories sharpened Prynne's venom. He urged that the fullest penalty should be exacted. A trial was arranged, at which Laud made an able defence. But he was the mark of many foes, and nothing could save him. His condemnation was hurried through, and early in 1645 he was beheaded on Tower Hill. He met his end in the dogged and even frame of mind he had always shown in life. Without complaint or resistance he stooped to what was inevitable.

JEREMY TAYLOR, BISHOP OF DOWN

"This day is mine and yours, but ye know not what shall be on the morrow."

"... Which when I saw, I wept, and was afraid ; for I knew that it must be so with all men, for we also die, and end our quarrels and contentions by passing to a final sentence."

"Holy Dying"

THE warm sunshine of August was flinging the rich glow of summer upon the grey walls of Cambridge on the day when Jeremy Taylor was born, within the parish of the great College of Trinity. The first sights upon which his baby eyes rested were marked with the honourable signs of age and learning. Even in the days of the Stewarts, Cambridge was no mushroom town. The solemn sense of the garnerings of ages was already its own, and even the little barber's shop which Jeremy Taylor called "home" must have felt the spell of the Spirit of Learning. The barber's shop may appear a tawdry background for the youthful days of a great divine. But against this was the influence of the town, silent with the repose of bygone generations ; noisy with the flow of fresh young life. Ever in the past, yet ever in the present, at once a fulfilment and a vision.

And as for the barber's shop, a barber then was not a mere man of brushes and soap. He bore something of the surgeon about him. He was the link between the regular professional and the tradesman, and he scorned to consider himself in the light of an ordinary shopkeeper.

Moreover this particular barber, who was father to

Jeremy Taylor, could boast of ancient families connected with himself, so that in spite of his humble trade, he prided himself upon being sprung from a well-bred race. All this mattered very little to the boy who played games in the narrow, twisted streets, or maybe fished in the brownish waters of the river, flowing almost without a ripple past stretches of flat meadow-land, open as far as the eye could see.

In time fresh duties arose. The days of happy, irregular teaching under his father's care came to an end. The boy was thirteen, and quick at learning. It was time he had better teachers. So to college he was sent, and in 1626 Caius registered among her pupils one Jeremy Taylor. The year before this, Cambridge had welcomed another new-comer, John Milton, who in 1625 went up to Christ's College. Whether the two undergraduates ever met within the quadrangles is quite unknown. Milton was some five years older, and at thirteen, five years almost mark a generation. So that it is more than probable that Milton and Taylor did not meet, unless it was the merest and most casual encounter.

At the University, Taylor's pleasant manner won him many a friend, and in spite of his extreme youthfulness he soon had a niche of his own. A sense of the business of life very early came home to him, and his mind was alert for action. He had none of that slow, dreamy awakening which often marks the development of a poet. Perhaps the circumstances of his birth influenced him here. At all events he was quick-eyed and practical, ready for any emergency, and always eager to grapple with difficulties. He spoke fluently and well, and the musical pitch of his voice added delight to his words. A sermon preached in London brought him into the notice of Laud, who inquired into his circumstances. Through Laud, too,

he finally got the offer of a fellowship at All Souls, Oxford, in the year 1635. This was the very chance which the young student needed. He was still over-young for public work, but in Oxford he would have time for reading, time for thought. He would meet and talk with some of the ripest scholars of the day. Above all, he would be able to get the full worth out of these advantages by being freed, through his fellowship, from the thought of money anxieties. What more could any ardent young scholar desire than time and quietness amid congenial friends, and enough means to pay for his wants? Though there are no records of Jeremy Taylor's life at this time, it is safe to assume that he accepted Laud's kindly services with a grateful heart and an eager determination to prove his love and thanks.

Many and long absences from Oxford during the time he was a Fellow are explained on the ground that he was at the same time acting as Chaplain to the Archbishop, so that frequent journeys were unavoidable. And very pleasant jaunts they must have been to the young student, who loved the green hedges and the cool woods almost as much as he delighted in books. With what bright, interested gaze he must have looked out, as the big, lumbering coach made its way down the deep rutted road that lay between Oxford and the capital! But in 1638 these travels came to an end. In that year he became Rector for the parish of Uppingham in Rutlandshire. A good deal had happened in the twenty-five years that had passed since he had been a child in the barber's shop in Cambridge. To become rector at twenty-five, even in those days when boys in their teens were men, was a great event. Taylor had certainly done well.

These days in the Rutlandshire village must have been very happy, in spite of the worries sure to come to a man

with sincere and steadfast religious opinions, at a time when a difference in views was looked upon as almost a crime. The Episcopalians, the Roman Catholics, and the Nonconformists formed three points of a triangle hedging in the whole nation ; and unlucky was the man who had not a place on one of these vantage grounds, from which it seemed the proper thing to hurl insults at the other two. So it came about that when Jeremy Taylor was asked to preach at Oxford, on the 5th of November 1638, in commemoration of the evil Gunpowder Plot, he preached with such plain, unvarnished gusto, that the Roman Catholics rose up, and with one voice bitterly denounced him. The sermon was afterwards published, with a dedication to Laud, who had always been a true and generous friend.

The tract is interesting both as a specimen of Taylor's early work, and as a proof of his steadfast and upright character.

The agonies and raptures which swept through the minds of many men of the day were unknown to his quieter spirit. He knew nothing of the emotional struggles common to men such as Baxter and Bunyan. He was a clear and able reasoner, and though his points are often hidden by splendid bursts of rhetoric, these flowers of speech did not spring from any mystical strain, but from a keen and observant eye and a passionate love for nature. He loved green meadows and wide-spreading trees ; the noise of children playing in the lanes ; or the sight of a familiar face, beaming a welcome. He was very much alive to the human note in everything, and he delighted in the friendliness of life. The metaphors that he uses nearly always reveal this winsome side of his character. "So have I seen," he says in one of his most famous passages, "a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and at first, it was fair as the morning, and full with

the dew of heaven, as a lamb's fleece, but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age ; it bowed the head and broke its stalk ; and at night, having lost some of its leaves and all its beauty, it fell into the position of weeds and outworn faces." Here it is a rose that gives him his idea. There are many such instances—a child at its game ; a flower in its sweetest bloom ; a sharp hoarfrost in spring. Other men, such as Sir Thomas Browne, have been inspired by the sight of a handful of withered bones. But it was beauty that gave Jeremy Taylor his finest thoughts about eternity. Like the Celt, he saw in loveliness the shadow of decay, and in the sweetest songs he heard the saddest strains. "For not only the winter quarter is full of storms and cold and darkness, but the beauteous spring hath blasts and sharp frosts ; the fruitful turning summer is melted with heat, and burnt with the kisses of the sun, her friend, and choked with dust, and the rich autumn is full of sickness, and we are weary of that which we enjoy, because sorrow is its biggest portion." A man who can write passages like these may readily be forgiven the fault of repeating too often the words : "So have I seen," or of letting himself riot in words.

After five years, Taylor exchanged his rectorship of Uppingham for that of Overstone. Here he settled in 1643 with his two little sons. Many sad and happy memories filled his mind as he bade farewell to the little Rutlandshire village. Hither he had brought his bride, full of the first shy eagerness of married life. Now he was turning away without her. For a year ago she had died, soon after the death of her infant son. Personal sorrows struck Jeremy Taylor hard. His affections were deep and

sincere, and his private letters again and again betray pride and delight in his home, or desolation and grief at human loss. His sense of the shortness of life grew daily deeper, and in 1651, in his preface to *Holy Dying*, he exclaims: "I myself have lately seen and felt much sorrows of death, and such sad departure of dearest friends, that it is more than high time we should think ourselves nearly concerned in the accidents." A little later he says of human delight: "Men's joys are troublesome; and besides that the fear of losing them takes away the present pleasure, they are also wavering and full of trepidation. . . . They dwell upon ice, and they converse with the wind. . . . The same may every man observe to be true of himself; he is always restless and uneasy; he dwells upon the waters, and leans upon thorns, and lays his head upon a sharp stone." The vanity of life and the folly of pleasures, surely these are the text of a man looking upon the dark side of the world! And yet Jeremy Taylor was never a pessimist. He was an eager, practical soul, pricked on to fresh efforts by the thought of the swift passage of time, yet always ready to find time for a homely chat, and always at leisure to listen to tales of trouble and distress. He was charitable in days when charity was not thought a special virtue, and after his death Bishop Rust declared of him: "The hungry that he fed, and the naked that he clothed, and the distressed that he supplied, and the fatherless that he provided for; the poor children that he put to apprentice . . . will now sound a trumpet to that charity which he dispersed with his right hand, but would not suffer his left hand to have any knowledge of it."

Like all other preachers he was the victim of many changes in the Civil War. Twice he was imprisoned, but never for very long, and both times he was fortunate in

meeting with courtesy and kindness. "I know not," he says in regard to the first occasion, "whether I have been more preserved by the courtesies of my friends, or the gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy." Imprisoned again a second time he writes: "I now have that liberty that I can receive any letters, and send any; for the gentlemen under whose custody I am, as they are careful of their charges, so they are civil to my person."

With the accession of Charles II., the Episcopalians once more rose into first favour. Jeremy Taylor was in Ireland, where he had been installed since 1658, and so he was out of direct touch with the Court. But he had many friends in England anxious to do him a kindness. Few men of talent had lived through the stormy Civil War without making enemies. But Jeremy Taylor's sweet disposition, his fair and reasonable judgments, his friendly manner, and his endless little kindnesses, made him liked by all who met him. Without winning the doubtful prize of extreme popularity, he was one of the best-liked men of his day, and there was a good deal of satisfaction when it was known that he had been made Bishop of Down (1661). The appointment had its disadvantages; in fact it was a very prickly rose. On the one hand were the Roman Catholics, hot and angry; only too ready to fling themselves upon the English Bishop, whose outspoken sermon of '38 they had by no means forgotten. Then there were the Protestants, a sincere but dour, self-centred body, hating the Catholics as heartily as the Catholics hated them. To be bishop over such a flock was not at all an easy matter, nor, as a rule, a pleasant one. Jeremy Taylor, with his strong love of peace, and his delight in kindly little deeds, was very much troubled at the difficulties that met him. He wrote sharply and speedily against the evils of Papacy, but he spoke of his

opponents with no bitterness. To him they were "the poor deluded Irish," and his plain-speaking was nothing more than "a labour of love." But remedies are not always agreeable to sufferers. The Irish ungraciously flung back the Bishop's well-meant efforts, and these last few years of his life can hardly be said to have been happy. In 1667 he died after a few days' illness.

"He that would willingly be fearless of death," he had said in *Holy Dying*, "must learn to despise the world. . . . It is certainly a great baseness and pusillanimity of spirit that makes death terrible, and extremely to be avoided." The words reveal his own deepest feelings. He had the free, open courage of a pure and noble mind; but he was haunted by the uncertainties which appal an imaginative spirit. To such a man the end of life would bring both its bitter and its sweet; its agony at the loss of human relationship; its rapture at the foretaste of unguessed-at delights.

"This great prelate," said Bishop Rust in his memorial sermon, had the good humour of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a schoolman . . . the reason of an angel, the piety of a saint; he had devotion enough for a cloister, learning enough for a University, and wit enough for a college of virtuosi." They were the words of a hero-worshipper. No man ever lived to deserve such eulogy. Yet they serve to show how much love Jeremy Taylor won in his day, and they bear witness to the worth of a character able to rouse such feelings.

RICHARD BAXTER

*" I asked him [Johnson] what works of Richard Baxter I should read. He said, ' Read any of them : they are all good ! ' "*² ²²

BOSWELL

*" Richard, Richard, dost thou think we'll hear thee poison the Court? Richard, thou art an Old Fellow, an Old Knave ; thou hast written books eno' to load a cart, every one as full of Sedition (I might say Treason) as an Egg is full of Meat."*²³

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE JEFFERIES

DOWN a deep rutted lane in Shropshire, on a day in early spring, came a company of noisy boys, chattering in their uncouth, country accent, and eagerly scanning the thick hedges on either side of the rough, brown road. They were evidently bent on a particular errand, and soon the cry of a startled bird showed that they were carrying out a cruel intention of robbing nests. Amongst the throng was a slight, delicate-looking boy, with an eager, clever face. It was Richard Baxter, now about twelve years old, and well known in the village for his high spirits and mischievous ways. His parents scolded him for want of respect ; the neighbours grumbled at the tricks he played upon them ; and more than one farmer had chased him out of an orchard, whither he had gone to steal fruit. Had any of the long-suffering villagers been told that this naughty boy, the torment of the place, would end by becoming a famous and sincere divine, the idea would have been met with scorn and laughter. Richard Baxter become a preacher ! As well expect a cabbage to grow

into a rose. The one would be just as easy to believe as the other.

Baxter had been born in 1615, and he was known everywhere as a noisy, troublesome boy till he was about fourteen years of age, when a sudden but lasting change came over him. Through reading a book called *Persons of Resolution*, he saw, in a flash, the folly of an idle, careless life, and he straightway made up his mind to be different. With the eagerness natural to his disposition he became as anxious about being good as he had before been careless about being bad. At nights, when he lay on his hard bed in the tiny cottage that he called "home," he thought feverishly about his sins. One after another his wrong-doings came into his mind, making him every minute more miserable. With deep earnestness he prayed to God, and by-and-by comfort came to his tortured mind. The seed of peace which thus fell into his heart remained with him ever after. Yet to the end of his long life he never forgot the early agonies he had suffered at the awakening of a sense of wrong-doing.

Very little education came his way, for he himself states that his "rise was mean and his descent obscure." The village school was his only teacher, and any greatness in his writing must be put down to natural gifts, or to studies undertaken of his own accord. He determined to become a minister; but his parents stood in the way. They saw he had talents, and becoming ambitious, they urged him to try for a footing at Court. Not altogether pleased at the prospect, Baxter made his way to London. But there was no room in the worldly court of James I. for this raw, grave-eyed, country youth, with his serious ways, and his blunt manner of speaking. Seeing that his errand was hopeless, Baxter very cheerfully returned to his Shropshire village.



Richard Baxter
Painter unknown
Photo Emery Walker



At the age of twenty-three he was ordained by the Bishop of Worcester and eked out a living by school teaching. Even in the hot years of youth he was moderate and broadminded in his outlook, and though at first he had little sympathy with the Puritan sects, he soon became convinced that many of them "were honest and godly people." The points that disturbed them seemed often enough of very little real importance to his more balanced mind, and he soon gained a reputation as a large-minded and sincere thinker.

He found his first real difficulty in the "Et cetera" Oath of 1640, which exacted a pledge from the clergy that "they would never consent to the alteration of the present government of the Church by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, *etc.*" Upon this last word the more cautious and clearheaded grounded. Refusal to sign meant expulsion. But even so, many hesitated to agree blindly. What did "et cetera" really mean? Who could say to what he would be pledging himself by putting his name to such a vague term? Very hot and excited debates arose over the point, and the satirist, Cleveland, caught up the feeling and cleverly embedded it in one of his poems:

*"Who swears et cetera, swears more oaths at once
Than Cerberus out of his triple sconce.
Who views it well, with the same eye beholds
The old, false serpent in his numerous folds."*

The oath had been framed with the idea of uniting the clergy, but instead it stirred up fatal questioning. Many who had been content to hold quietly by the old way of thinking were forced into facing facts, with the result that not a few of them "began to think better of the Cause of Nonconformity, and to Honour the Nonconformists more

than before." Amongst these, was Richard Baxter. And so the strife in the Church at home grew greater, while from Scotland came frequent and threatening sounds of disturbance.

In 1641 Baxter undertook a charge at Kidderminster, in which place almost the whole of the rest of his life was spent. The vicar, old and infirm, was not disturbed in his vicarage, but the preaching and work of the parish fell to Baxter. Before long he had got the whole town by the ears, through his strong, outspoken words against evil living. Inflamed crowds mobbed his house, and sought him out with sticks and any odd weapons. He could not go abroad without being followed by rude hoots and evil words. But the greater the tumult, the calmer and more self-possessed grew the preacher.

"Since you so requite me as to seek my blood," he said, "I am willing to leave you and save you from that guilt." The angry crowds were struck dumb with shame and dismay. A sudden change of feeling swept over them, and they began to mutter they would be very sorry to part with him. Gradually things settled down, and before long the church was crowded with the very men who had been foremost in flinging stones. Baxter's courage and calmness had won the day, and henceforward he had a warm place in the hearts of the townsfolk. Their friendly feelings touched the preacher's affections, and made him toil more than ever for his people, till gradually a tie of good fellowship was formed, never to be broken. In the Civil War he took the side of the Parliament, and for a time he acted as an army chaplain. Even in the heat of war he was known as a man of moderation and good counsel. So that there was nothing unfitting in his appointment as King's chaplain at the time of the Restoration. He, at least, never came

within the reach of Butler's bitter and prejudiced satire against those who

*" Prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks ;
Call fire and sword, and desolation
A godly thorough reformation.*

*Compound for sins they are inclined to
By damning those they have no mind to."*

Baxter's common-sense made him hate division, and in 1660 he eagerly accepted the invitation of Charles II. to meet with other divines to discuss a religious settlement. But settlements were hopeless in the teeth of the Royalist reaction, and after a hundred disappointments the chaplain complained that " They were all branded as rigid Presbyterians, though they never put up one petition for Presbytery, but pleaded for Primitive Episcopacy. They were represented in the common talk of those who thought it their interest to be their Adversaries, as the most seditious People in the World, unworthy to be us'd like Men, or to enjoy any Liberty. They could not go abroad, but they met with daily Reproaches and false Stories raised upon them."

Hard upon the conference came the five severe laws often grouped together as the " Clarendon Code." These were the Corporation Act (1661), the Act of Uniformity (1662), the Ordination Act (1662), the Conventicle Act (1664), and The Five Mile Act (1665). The second of these, the Act of Uniformity, drove Baxter into the opposing camp, and he was among the two thousand ejected ministers that " it was modish to run down as a Pack of unreasonable and humoursome Complainants."

By this time he had reached middle life, and with years

his tolerance, always great, had become larger. He cared much more about points of agreement, and much less about differences in doctrine. He was neither so hot nor so hasty in his judgment of others, yet he was severer about his own conduct. His soul was much more troubled over the sorrows of the world, and if he "found few so Good when he came near them, as he apprehended them at a distance," he also found "few so Bad as the Malicious and Censorious do imagine."

To such a mind the growing bitterness in the Church was not only a religious disaster, but a deep, personal sorrow. He wrote often and reasonably, pleading for a more generous outlook. But the times were neither sweet nor reasonable, and in 1685 Baxter found himself in prison for his pains. His trial was conducted by Lord Chief Justice Jefferies, as savage a man as ever lived, who glared upon the prisoner with bloated, impudent eyes, gleaming with inhuman malice. Five lawyers stood in defence of the prisoner, but they were all quickly silenced by the judge, who swore they were always to be found playing a part in the dirtiest causes. "Were it not for you Gentlemen of the Long Robe," he roared, "who should have more Wit and Honesty, than support and hold up these Factious Knaves by the Chin, we should not be at the Pass we are." Reply was useless against such a torrent, and Baxter was sworn in. One of the Counsel, named Wallop, tried to urge that the prisoner should be treated with respect since his writings had always shown great moderation, and he had himself once been mentioned by the king in connection with a Bishopric. "Baxter for Bishops," cried Jefferies, with a huge, course laugh. "Turn to the place, turn to it." The passages were quoted, upon which the judge let loose his bottled-up wrath: "Ay faith," he shouted, "this is

your Presbyterian Cant . . . Bishops set apart by such Factious, Snivelling Presbyterians as himself. A Kidderminster Bishop he means. According to the saying of a Late Learned Author : ‘ and every Parish shall maintain a Tithe Pig Metropolitan.’ ”

Baxter, who had listened to the outburst in silence, now ventured to put in a word. Jefferies cut him short :

“ Richard, Richard,” he said mockingly, “ dost thou think we’ll hear thee poison the Court ? Richard, thou art an Old Fellow, an Old Knave ; thou hast written books eno’ to load a cart, every one as full of Sedition (I might say Treason) as an Egg is full of Meat. Hadst thou been whipp’d out of the Writing Trade forty years ago, it had been Happy. Thou pretendest to be a Preacher of the Gospel of Peace, and thou hast one Foot in the Grave ; ’tis time for thee to begin to think what Account thou intendest to give.” He paused and flashed his leering eyes round the court, then he went on, with a sudden, dark menace : “ *I’ll look after thee.* I know thou hast a mighty Party, and I see a great mass of the Brotherhood in Corners, waiting to see what will become of their mighty Donne . . . but by the Grace of God *I’ll crush you all.*”

A dull sense of despair seized upon those in Court when they heard the coarse threats of the judge, and saw the hatred in his glance. Many well-known persons had come prepared to give witness on Baxter’s behalf, but all evidence was useless in a court managed by such a bully, and no one attempted a defence. Baxter, however, was not the man to be frightened into silence and when the jury had retired he plucked up courage to say boldly :

“ Does your Lordship think any Jury will pretend to pass a verdict upon me upon such a Tryal ? ”

A cruel light danced across Jefferies' bleared eyes.

"I'll warrant you, Mr Baxter," he cried. "Don't you trouble yourself about that." His guess was correct enough. No jury, however bold, dared to cross the wishes of the ferocious Chief Justice, and they came back with a verdict of guilty. A fine of five hundred marks, with imprisonment till it should be paid, completed the sentence, and Baxter was led away to gaol. A year later he was set free, through the good offices of Lord Powis, and upon the promise of good conduct.

From the time of his release till his death he lived in a house in Charter House Yard, where he busied himself with his writings, or with private meetings held within his own sitting-rooms. By degrees ill-health crept upon him, and in 1691 he died.

To the last he displayed the same unruffled, courageous spirit. "My friends," he said to some that had come to visit him. "You come hither to learn to die. I am not the only person that must go this way. I can assure you that your whole life, be it never so long, is little enough to prepare for Death."

So ended the life of one who had looked upon the world with wide, searching gaze, who had judged everyone mercifully, except himself; who had yearned for a toleration that his day could not endure; whose religion sprang from the depths of a sincere and earnest soul. The very large number of books which bear his name tell his industry and zeal. But they do more than this. In plain, sonorous English they show the deeper emotions of a great and spiritual mind. In a fine passage in *Dying Thoughts* he exclaims triumphantly: "Shall the waters grudge that they must glide away, and the plants that they must die, and half die every winter, and the fruit and flowers that they must fall, or the moon that it must

have its changing motions, or the sun that it must set and rise so oft, when all is but the action and order which maketh up that harmony and perfection which was designed by the Creator and is pleasing to his will? . . . That is simply best which God willeth; therefore to live here is best, whilst I do live here; and to depart is best when the time for my departure cometh." In this simple faith he lived and died.

WILLIAM PENN

*"A trewë swynkere and a good was he,
Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best, with al his hoolë herte,
At allë tymës, thogh him gamed or smerte."*

CHAUCER

THE cloud of Civil War which had been threatening at the time when Newton was born, burst into thunder in the year of William Penn's birth. Amid the sunshine of July the battle of Marston Moor had been fought, and though summer had given place to October, the autumn brought no promise of a happy settlement. The shouts of strife were getting steadily louder; parties were fiercer and more uproarious. The most far-sighted could see no end to the trouble. Amid circumstances such as these, on the 14th day of October, 1644, was born William Penn, who was to become a foremost figure in a party clinging to the doctrines of peace.

He was the child of a happy and luxurious home. His father, Admiral Penn, was a breezy, generous man, not too particular over small scruples, provided he could secure for himself a well-paid, honourable post. During the Protectorate he served Cromwell, but, at the Restoration, he cheerfully held office under Charles. Bluff, good-natured, worldly-wise, he had a very different spirit from that of his thoughtful little son, who at twelve was awed by mystical joy at seeing a sudden glory in the room, giving him the "strongest conviction of the being of God."

Side by side with this spiritual strain in Penn's character, was a healthy and wholesome love for all kinds of outdoor sport. He was no moody boy, hiding away from his companions. He delighted in every game. Often he raced, breathless and eager, across the playing fields of the Grammar School at Chigwell, in Essex, the keenest among that throng of lighthearted boys, now, centuries since, sunk into dust and ashes.

Chigwell gave place to Oxford, and Oxford to Lincoln's Inn. The boy had now passed into early manhood. He was twenty-one, and the world was before him. Intervals of study had been pleasantly varied by travels abroad, and Pepys, always sharp-eyed in the matters of dress and manners, remarked with some spite that Penn had come back from the Continent bringing with him a "great deal . . . of the vanity of French garb, and an affected manner of speech and gait."

This was in 1664. The "French garb" was soon to disappear in favour of the becoming simplicity of Quaker dress; for in 1667 Penn openly confessed to Quaker opinions. Admiral Penn heard the news with violent disgust. He had intended his son for a very different life, and he was thoroughly annoyed at the announcement. His friends laughed and condoled with him. This only enraged him the more. It touched his spirit to the quick that London society should speak with amusement and wonder about the son on whom he had heaped the benefits of travel and a college education. But if he thought to wipe out these new principles with bluster or threats, he soon discovered his mistake. The son was as determined as the father, and sooner than give way they parted. These unfortunate differences were afterwards patched up, but to the end the lusty Admiral found it hard to understand the drift of his son's mind.

Penn, meanwhile, was on fire with zeal for his cause. He published *Truth Exalted*, in which he warmly defended the doctrines of the Quakers. Almost before the ink was dry he followed it up with others, equally outspoken in tone. Prison was his reward. Here, like Bunyan, he used the enforced quiet in writing fresh pamphlets. *No Cross, No Crown* was sent forth as the result of these lonely hours. The boldness of his bearing, and the breadth of his view made him the hero of many. He believed that for himself there was no creed like the faith of the Quakers, but he was perfectly willing that everyone else should be allowed entire freedom in worship. His attitude was too largeminded for the times, and his continual plea for toleration offended not a few. "I abhor," he said in 1686, "two principles in religion, and pity them that own them; the first is obedience upon authority without conviction; and the other destroying them that differ from me for God's sake. Such a religion is without judgment, though not without teeth." In this, as in many other points, there is a likeness between Penn and Sir Thomas More. Both were men of great personal conviction; both loved tolerance; and both longed to bring about some betterment in social conditions.

Sundry imprisonments and persecutions led Penn to ponder upon the lot of the Quakers generally. These bickerings of fortune affected his spirit very little; for he had a firm and philosophic mind. But he had also a strong practical bent, and he began to turn over schemes by which he might form a colony where Quakers could spend their lives in peace. He begged the Crown to give him a tract of land in North America in exchange for a debt, promising that he would answer for the well-being of the colonists. In 1681 he got his way. The stretch

of land now known as Pennsylvania became his, subject to the control of the English Parliament, and in 1682 he and a hundred friends set sail. These departures of serious-minded men and women were becoming familiar to the English people, yet they never failed to jeer at each new expedition. Quakers were the special butt of ridicule and abuse, and many of the bitterest gibes of ballad makers were aimed at the sect that believed in the presence of an "inward light," and taught the doctrine of peace. All sorts of coarse and unjust taunts were turned into verse, a typical song being "The Quaker's Farewell to England," published in 1675.

*" Come Friends, let's away,
Since our Yea and our Nay
In England now is slighted ;
To the Indians we'll go,
And our Lights to them show,
That they be no longer benighted.*

: : : : :
*To New Jersey with speed,
Come all Friends that need
Wealth, or large Possessions,
The Indians we'll make
To serve us, and Quake
And be slaves to our Professions.²²*

The charge in the last verse was wholly untrue, at least in the case of Penn. His abilities were never seen to better advantage than in his dealings with the Indians, whom he drew into close and friendly relations with the English. Though he held slaves, he was the first American legislator who tried to secure legal rights for them, and in 1710 he did his utmost to push through a Bill forbidding the importation of negroes. His suggestions were thrown

out by the English Parliament, but the merit of making the attempt rests with him.

As Governor of Pennsylvania, he showed great ability in ruling. His intentions were better than his judgment ; and sometimes his faith in human nature was too strong. Rogues and swindlers often boasted that they had gained the better of him, and Penn, to his sorrow, found that the men he had most trusted had only been playing a part. But these disappointments never spoiled the sweetness of his nature. He loved mankind, and like More, he set his heart upon an ideal commonwealth. More secured his within the pages of a book ; Penn attempted the more difficult plan of a real colony. Both dreamed dreams, but with this difference, that while More was always aware that his dreams were only dreams, Penn always cherished a hope that he might wake up and find his visions true. Brave men both of them, each an idealist in his own way.

In 1687 there happened an incident in Penn's life which has given rise to criticism, and called forth Macaulay's bitterest taunts. James II. issued his Declaration of Indulgence. This famous measure was set forward as the outcome of a genuine desire for toleration. It did not require much insight to see that it was really a crafty attempt at securing for the Roman Catholic Party favours which the king could not get by straightforward means. But above this, the nation said that in issuing an Indulgence by his personal authority alone, James was breaking the constitution and robbing Parliament of its hereditary right. It was this latter point which made Churchmen and Nonconformists alike join in rejecting the benefits offered them. Penn was among the few who accepted the overtures of James at their face value, and through his influence the Quakers sent in an address of thanks to the king. His conduct can be explained upon

many grounds. Though a clever man, he was not far-seeing, and he probably failed to grasp the full drift of the bargain that James was proposing to make. Apart from this, his own personal feelings had always been strongly in favour of toleration for everyone. At the outset of his colonising scheme, he had declared that "no men, nor numbers of men upon earth, hath power or authority to rule over men's conscience in religious matters," and he had never lost sight of this assertion. Moreover he had always been on friendly terms with James, and he was among the few who were openly loyal, even after the Revolution of 1688.

Under William and Mary, Penn was the object of a good deal of suspicion, and in 1699 he returned to his colony. Three years later he came to England on matters of business, and meanwhile Anne became queen. Her accession improved Penn's position, and for a time he enjoyed a good deal of favour. Then things began to go badly in Pennsylvania, till by 1710 even his best friends in England began to look at him with a cold eye. With splendid courage he set himself to grapple with the situation. He wrote an address to his "Old Friends," in such simple and moving terms that the hostile spirit of the assembly in Pennsylvania was quite changed. By this time the fearless Quaker was sixty-six years of age, and the sudden turn of opinion in his favour must have stirred his affections to the quick. The Indians, too, had a real love for the man who many years before had made truce with them. Affection such as they felt does not readily wither, and his death in 1718 called forth no truer tribute of love than the lament which they brought.

Penn was seventy-four when he died, and for six years before this he had suffered grave ill-health. In 1712, he had surrendered his rights over the Colony to the Crown,

receiving in return a large sum of money. The little villages of Brentford and of Ruscomb were the favourite haunts of his later years, and he ended his days in a quiet and secluded home, well suited as a background for the closing scene in a life spent in a large endeavour after peace and tolerance.

Phase V—Science and the Fine Arts

FRANCIS BACON, VISCOUNT ST ALBANS

"I do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages."

BEN JONSON

IN strict point of time the career of Francis Bacon is associated with the reign of Queen Elizabeth rather than with that of James I. He was born in 1561, and he died in 1626. But his work and his importance belong chiefly to the days of the Stewarts, for he influenced succeeding generations much more than the men of his own day. He, himself, was aware that he saw ahead of his times, and in dying he bequeathed his name and memory to "men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and the next ages."

He had a splendid intellect, and many noble qualities, but a love for the comforts of life poisoned his conduct. He never lost sight of an opportunity for gain, and he who had spoken nobly for the advancement of learning, himself stooped to spend months and years of precious time in urging useless suits at Court. The meaner side of his character was thus thrown uppermost, and after years, it still casts a shadow on his greatness.

His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper to Elizabeth, was well liked by the queen; and the powerful Lord Burghley was his uncle. The boy thus grew up with the idea that he would some day be of importance at Court, and he early fell in love with the notion of being a man of power. But just when the most important period in his studies had arrived, when he was eighteen, and burning with desire to make his way at Elizabeth's Court, a sharp blow fell upon him in the shape of his father's death. Instead of finding an early pathway to fame and fortune, he was faced with the problem of living upon a much smaller income than he had hoped to enjoy. Besides this, he had lost for ever, not only a father, but a powerful friend at Court. There still remained his uncle, Lord Burghley, and to him the nephew went with an urgent and lengthy plea. Lord Burghley, however, turned him a polite but a very deaf ear. He had no love for his nephew, and he did not mean to further his advancement. Personal feeling may have brought about this judgment; or it may have arisen from a keen understanding of what was lacking in Bacon's character. Whatever the cause, to his utmost chagrin and discontent, Bacon became aware that he had small chance of looking for promotion through his uncle's good offices. His practical nature at once grasped the need for other plans, and he threw himself into the study of law. At the same time he lost no opportunity of snatching at a hope of Court favour, however forlorn the chance might seem. No fine sense of dignity held him back from the most open pursuit of royal bounty. The more persistent he grew, the colder and more inflexible was the queen. He haunted public men, and he especially fixed upon Essex as a man likely to help him. Essex, who was some five years younger than Bacon, was flattered by this courtship,

and he did all that he could. In 1594, he suggested that Bacon should be made Attorney-General. Then the ominous figure of Burghley stepped forward, saying the appointment would not be easily digested by Elizabeth. "Digest me no digestings," cried the Earl, "for the Attorneyship is that I must have for Francis Bacon." Burghley's reply is not given, but no doubt the cautious statesman noted in his mind that whoever was to get the post, it must not be his young, and over-ambitious kinsman. And when Burghley had intentions about any matter, he usually managed to make things turn out in the way he wanted. So, in the end, Coke got the coveted office, and Essex found himself baffled. Bacon watched from afar, his dark eye gleaming with fury and disappointment. His pride was bitterly hurt but he was not vanquished. In a letter to his friend, Fulke Greville, he complains: "I have been like a piece of stuff bespoken in the shop; and if her Majesty will not take me, it may be the selling by parcels will be more gainful." He attempted every avenue to royal favour, and when he was again and again disappointed, he fell back upon humbler approaches. He had been a member of Parliament since 1584, and his reputation as a speaker was very high. He now seized upon this advantage and gradually made himself so useful to the Government that he came to be regarded almost as an official. By these means he got into some sort of communication with the Court, and though he was still very far from the position he hankered after, he had a hold upon those who had favours to give. He had at last ceased to look upon Essex as a patron, and when opportunity arose, he did not even shrink from publicly attacking the man who had once worn himself out on Bacon's behalf. For some time Essex had mismanaged affairs in Ireland, and though Bacon warned him of the conse-

quences, he paid no heed. Then Elizabeth grew angry. It was said the earl was trying to stir up the citizens of London against the queen. Early in 1601 he was brought to judgment, and Bacon was called to sum up the case against him. Did Bacon shrink from the odious position of conducting a public attack upon his friend ? There is no evidence of any such scruples ; no record of a struggle before he could bring his mind to the point. He spoke brilliantly, and he did not spare his scorn. But he showed no reluctance, and he made no apology. Those who watched the scene must have been moved by the encounter between these two, once close friends, now facing each other as public antagonists. The brilliant and reckless courtier looked with a proud, disdainful glance upon the keen face of the advocate, pressing home his case so cleverly and with such ruthless zest. So this was Francis Bacon ; the man for whom he had begged the Attorneyship ? No wonder if a bitter note crept into the voice of Essex as he said : “ I call forth Mr Bacon against Mr Bacon.” Bacon started and leant forward, listening silently. Essex began to speak. The whole court hung upon his words, as he quoted from letters he had once received from the lawyer now pleading against him. Coke was supposed to be conducting the case, but the trial was really a duel between Essex and Bacon. In spite of comparative youth, both were disappointed men, who had been egged on by a restless and eager temperament, to a vain pursuit after wealth and power.

The trial came to an end. Essex's guilt was clearly proved. The sentence of beheading was passed upon him. Bacon heard the fatal words fall from the judge, then he turned away. With what thoughts, who can guess ?

Two years passed by, and Bacon's fortunes remained pretty much what they had been before. Then came tidings of the death of Elizabeth, and at once his hopes

revived. He hurried forward with eager addresses, in which he declared that the "king's voice was the voice of God in man." James was inclined to be friendly, but two figures barred the way. Coke, Bacon's old rival, looked at him with a malicious eye, and though Lord Burghley was dead, his son, Robert Cecil, was as cold towards his cousin as ever the uncle had been. Bacon might try his hardest to edge his way into the magic circle; but he had very little chance of squeezing through so long as these two were near to thwart him. Once more the much-tried lawyer was forced back upon himself, finding comfort for his disappointment in scientific experiments, and in musings upon the great schemes of philosophy which were simmering in his brain.

When James had been nine years on the throne, Bacon's promotion seemed as far off as ever. If he ventured to take a step towards the king, he at once found himself skilfully checked by his cousin, Robert Cecil, and power and riches still tantalised him from afar. But in 1612 Cecil died, and the way to the king was open. A swarm of flatterers and tuft-hunters rushed upon the sovereign, Bacon among the rest. He was not too proud to urge his claims upon the king in the plainest terms. "I have been," he wrote, "an old truant in the school house of your council-chamber, though on the second form; yet longer than any that now sitteth hath been upon the head form. . . . I will be ready as a chessman to be wherever your Majesty's royal hand shall set me."

The king made promises to everyone, and Bacon began to hope at last his long dreams of advancement were to come true. Many years of waiting had made him cautious, and he watched warily for an opportunity. It came in 1613, when Coke was made Chief Justice of the king's bench. With a good deal of reluctance Coke accepted

the higher office, hating to think that the post he was leaving would be filled by his old enemy. Very sourly he gave way, and Bacon stepped into his empty place. He was now Attorney-General, occupying the place upon which he had looked for years with covetous eyes. Twenty years ago, he had fought hard for the same position; twenty years ago Essex had declared he "must have" the attorneyship for him, and yet for all that time he had been deliberately kept back from tasting power. Somewhat bitter thoughts must have mingled with his self-satisfaction when he took his seat for the first time as Attorney. At fifty-two, life had lost a good deal of the zest it had held at thirty. Twenty years had made many changes in the man. He had become confirmed in his habit of self-seeking; his finer qualities had become blunted; he was known among men as a tuft-hunter and a hanger-on. Nevertheless, in the midst of much sordidness and avarice, he had not lost sight of his noble resolve of serving the cause of Science. Those long years which he had wasted in angling for the favour of Elizabeth had been marked by the publication of his *Essays*, and disappointed by James, he had found leisure in 1605 to bring out the *Advancement of Learning*. Philosophy strove hard to secure him as her disciple, but his devotion was not proof against Preferment when it came by. To the end of his life he never succeeded in conquering his love for riches and soft living; and he never made any real effort at self-denial. Though he was a philosopher, he had neither the aloofness nor the serenity of the true thinker. In some respects he united the qualities of Dryden and Milton. Like Milton, he fostered a long-cherished and noble plan; but like Dryden he made ignoble bids for the loaves and fishes of daily life.

When he accepted the post of Attorney-General, he

thought that the appointment was a popular one. In this he was mistaken. He had few friends, and even these were not blind to his glaring faults ; while among the vulgar, his reputation was not at all high. His high-handed dealings had often been bitterly resented, and there was a good deal of murmuring and grumbling over the news that he had won office. Probably Bacon was unaware of the depth of the dislike in which the nation held him ; though he had himself never made any efforts to conceal his aversion for democracy. As a philosopher with a love for system and decorum the very word "people" was distasteful to him, suggesting ideas of upheavals and contests, the upsetting of plans, and the destruction of the orderliness, which as a scientist he valued highly.

As Attorney-General he showed himself capable and industrious. Huge mountains of arrears at first blocked his path, but with splendid courage and perseverance he actually succeeded in three years, in bringing them within limits. His fame was daily increasing. It was known that he received sums of money from clients, but it was also equally well known that these gifts never influenced his judgments. Often enough those who had given the money, went out of court full of an indignation they dared not express, because in spite of their doles, the sentence had gone against them.

For eight years he held office and flourished. He grew rich and powerful, and he seemed to be thoroughly established. Then, without a moment's warning, he was plunged in the deepest disgrace. He fell like an eagle—sheer into the sea beneath. The shock robbed him of every shred of courage and resistance. Before he could recover his balance, enemies came forward with tales of bribery and the receiving of gifts. He had taken doles

from X. ; handsome presents from B. ; and A. had shown him favours with a purpose. The charges were true enough, and Bacon did not attempt to deny them. He had done what others had done in the same position. It had been held no dishonour to take bribes and gifts ; he had only acted as many before him had done. The attack upon him was really an outburst of public fury against an injustice of long standing. By the malignity of Coke it took on a personal note, and became directed against a definite person, whereas in strict justice the charge should have been brought against the office. Bacon was quite aware he was guilty, but he put forward as an excuse that any gifts he had received had left his judgment untouched. He had been the receiver of bribes, but he had given sentence strictly according to his sense of righteousness. He saw at once that a good deal of spite lay at the bottom of the attack upon him, and he detected the relentless finger of Coke. " My very good Lord," he wrote to Buckingham, " Your Lordship spake of Purgatory. I am now in it, but my mind is a calm ; for my fortune is not my felicity. I know I have clean hands and a clean heart. . . . But Job himself, or whoever was the justest judge, by such hunting for matters against him as hath been used against me, may for a time seem foul, specially in a time when greatness is the mark, and *accusation is the game*."

Bacon's surmise was right. Coke had no intention of letting his old rival escape disgrace. He pressed the impeachment, and before long the former Attorney-General found himself in the Tower, with a fine of £40,000 written up against him. The sentence appalled him, but he admitted its justice. And with fine courage he afterwards recorded in writing : " I was the justest judge that was in England these fifty years ; but it was the justest

censure in Parliament that was these two hundred years."

Only a day or two passed before he was set free from the indignities of the Tower. He would have liked to find a home in London, but the city was forbidden him, so he retired to the seclusion of Gorhambury. More than once he tried to get back into royal favour, but he never recovered his old position. Nevertheless these years of disgrace form the most memorable part of his life. He had leisure for writing and for study. His great work, the *Novum Organum*, had appeared in 1620, the year before his fall, but the interval between his withdrawal from public affairs and his death was enriched by the publication of his *Life of Henry VII.*; by a translation of the *Advancement of Learning* (first written in Latin); and by an enlarged edition of the *Essays*.

His great service to science lies in the stress he lays on induction, and the value of experiment and investigation. He aptly compared himself to a signpost, pointing out the way, but not going along it. His investigations have perhaps had little practical effect upon modern scientific discoveries, but he deserves the glory of having been a pioneer; of having opened up a new way, till then not even guessed at. He encouraged a love of investigation; he pointed out new fields for experiment; he taught the value of observation. He was a scientist at a time when the personality of science was just emerging from the thralldom of literature. His writings are in-between works, to be judged by literary standards rather than by the stricter tests of science.

Two of his essays, one upon "Death," the other on "Gardens," rank among immortal writings. "Men fear Death as children fear to go in the dark." What simpler or more beautiful words could be imagined? In the face

of this everlasting mystery, the greatest are like little children, and "they fear the dark." And gardens? "God Almighty first planted a garden." The humblest plot of land is at once sweetened by the fragrance of the breath of God. Touches like these show the true worth of Bacon, and lift him from a sordid arena to the high ground to which he really belongs. Even among his contemporaries, his genius was spoken of with warmth and affection. "There was," says Ben Jonson, "one noble speaker who was full of gravity in his speaking. . . . No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. . . . His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him without loss. He commanded where he spoke . . . the fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end."

Some years later, Bacon being then dead, Pepys speaks of him in homely, familiar fashion: "I walked all alone in the fields behind Grayes Inn, making an end of reading over my dear *Faber Fortunæ* of my Lord Bacon's."

His dismissal from office gave fresh fire to Bacon's scientific labours, and it was when he was busy over an experiment with regard to the use of snow as a means of keeping back decay, that he was seized with a chill which turned into a fatal illness. Too unwell to go home, he drove to the house of a friend, and here a few days later he died in the year 1626.

Though his character as a man is stained by an unworthy desire for wealth and position, as a scientist he deserves undying fame. He was a fearless investigator, and the greatest interpreter of his times. But above all, he was a writer of grave and beautiful English.

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

*" They dreamt not of a perishable home
Who could thus build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here ;
Or through the aisles of Westminster to roam
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam
Melts, if it cross thy threshold."*

WORDSWORTH

SIR Christopher Wren had the good fortune to begin his life at the time of an intellectual revival. He was born in 1632, when science was struggling hard to find a secure foothold. National danger had quickened national intelligence. New and wonderful ideas were abroad, and the country was on the verge of an awakening, such as there had been in the days of Elizabeth after the defeat of the Armada.

Though literature had already burst into full blossom, science still was in the bud. It was the shock of the Stewart struggles that afforded the touch of inspiration. Heretofore literature had queened it royally among men inclined to letters, and science had been given a much smaller place. But from 1640 onward it stood upon its own merits, and was judged as a separate study. Extraordinary developments quickly followed, which were crowned in 1660 by the foundation of that proud association known as the Royal Society. One of the most famous presidents of this great body was Sir Christopher Wren.

The father of Wren was the rector of the village of East Knoyle in Wiltshire, and it was here that the boy spent the first years of his life. Fresh country air blew daily

round his home, placed in the midst of pleasant fields and green lanes. But child though he was, Wren was often unable to take part in the ordinary, healthy pleasures of the country, for he was small and delicate, and quite unfitted for the rough and tumble of vigorous out-of-door life. Studies at home filled up his days till he was fit for harder work, when he was sent to Westminster School, under the famous Dr Busby. At school he surprised and delighted his companions by his skill in making all kinds of clever little toys. Often when the rest would be racing about in the enjoyment of some game, Wren would seek for a quiet corner, where he could puzzle out in peace his latest mechanical device. Nor were these contrivances merely toys, for when he was only twelve he sent his father a new astronomical instrument, designed and made entirely by himself. Probably enough he was often teased by his schoolfellows for busying himself with engines when he might have been playing games. But shy and quiet though he was, Wren would be able to hold his own in these encounters, and after all, what did a few good-natured gibes matter compared with the exquisite joy of creating something? So he continued to busy himself over his toys, never so happy as when he had got a new idea to work out. Had he known it, there was in a village near Grantham, a child, as yet only an infant of two, who was to share the same passion for invention. This was Isaac Newton, born in 1642, when Wren was ten years old. And so these two boys, each destined to become a master-mind in the history of the nation, grew from childhood into youth, the one strewing the yard of the Grammar School at Grantham with the chippings of his water-clocks and windmills; the other poring over his engines and astronomical instruments under the shade of Westminster School. Years passed by, and the child of

two and the boy of ten both grew into men, acquainted with each other, and bound together in a warm friendship, built upon similar tastes and ambitions.

In 1653, Wren became fellow of All Souls College Oxford, and though he was only then twenty years of age, his reputation was already considerable. Hither, in 1654, came the sedate, clear-headed Evelyn, on a visit to the University. He had heard of Wren's performances, and he went round to call upon him. "After dinner," he says, (July 1644) "I visited that miracle of a youth, Mr Christopher Wren." The meeting between them can be imagined, though the conversation is unrecorded. Evelyn at the time was thirty-four, a shrewd, self-contained man. Wren, some twelve years younger, was full of the first enthusiasm of life, and delighted at receiving a call from the well-known scholar. Evelyn was anxious to know; Wren just as eager to tell, and the meeting must have been pleasant to both. A few days later they met again, this time at the dinner-table of Dr Wilkins of Wadham College, an enthusiast in experimenting upon beehives and every kind of mathematical instrument. Evelyn examined, noted, and remarked upon the many clever devices. He was told that "the prodigious young scholar" Wren, had had a large share in suggesting and making many of them. This led to further compliments, and Wren strengthened the friendship by giving his visitor a piece of marble, which he had coloured with a beautiful crimson stain. Evelyn never forgot the impression made upon him by this memorable visit to Oxford, Twenty-seven years later, when he had again been dining with the "prodigious young scholar," now famous and a knight, and grown into a middle-aged man, he wrote in his diary: "A wonderful genius had this incomparable person."

There were no struggles with poverty to harass Wren in his career. Professorships were eagerly thrust upon him, first in London and then later in Oxford. But the great opportunity of his life came at the time of the Great Fire in 1666. Those were terrible days, when house after house, street after street gave way before the fierce breath of the flames. Terror sank into despair, and the frantic outcries of the citizens changed into dull hopelessness, as they watched the city being sucked in by the fiery tongue of their enemy. "I saw the whole south part of the City burning from Chepeside to the Thames," said Evelyn, " . . . The conflagration was so universal, and the people so astonish'd, that from the beginning, I know not by what despondency or fate, they hardly stirred to quench it, so that there was nothing heard or seen but crying out and lamentation. . . . I now saw above ten thousand houses all in one flame ; the noise and crackling and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses and churches was like an hideous storme, and the aire all about so hot and inflam'd that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still and let the flames burn on. . . . London was, but is no more ! . . . the very pavements glowing with fiery rednesse, so as no horse nor man was able to tread on them, and the demolition had stopped all the passages, so that no help could be applied."

When the paralysis of the moment passed, every man took his share in pulling down or blowing up houses and workshops, till at last the flames were stopped by great masses of heaped-up rubbish. Round these smouldering, tragic ruins, suggesting many a story of desolation and horror, walked Sir Christopher Wren, musing over

their resurrection. The city would have to be built. Why should not the narrow streets and winding lanes be once for all swept away ? Why not restore the city, not upon its old, hemmed-in lines, but upon a nobler and wider plan ? In his mind he saw a new and fairer city, unfolding like a flower before him. He hastened to send in his schemes ; but his ideas were rejected. The town must needs be rebuilt, but the old foundations were to be kept. Brick should take the place of wood, but otherwise London should be what London had been before. Disappointed in his first great hope, Wren received with eager hands the order for the restoration of old St Paul's, now hopelessly in ruins. With a gleam of delight in his eye, he began to brood over designs. Till gradually there rose in his mind a vision of a great Cathedral, set upon a hill in the city. He built, he said, " for eternity," and he now bent the whole strength of his marvellous genius to the carrying out of this proud boast. His own desire would have been to enthrone St Paul's in a large and noble space, the centre and ornament of the whole city. But houses and shops crept nearer and nearer, and the splendid scheme was baffled. Building was everywhere going on apace, and soon out of the blackened ashes rose the same narrow streets which had before hampered the free passage of both carriages and people. On either side of the streets were rows of small, low houses, built, it is true, of brick, yet recalling vividly those ancient wooden erections, with small windows and poor ventilation, that had been seen in London before the Great Fire. How narrow the streets were, and how inconvenient as a means of thoroughfare, is shown by a ballad of 1636, aimed against the lumbering hackney coaches, which often blocked up the entire roadway and made progress impossible :

*“As I passed by this other day,
 Where sacke and charret spring,
 I heard a mad crowd by the way
 That loud did laugh and sing,
 High, downe dery, dery downe,
 With the hackney coaches downe,
 ’Tis cry’d aloud
 They make such a crowd
 Men cannot pass the town.*

*I love Sedans, ’cause they do plod
 And amble everywhere ;
 Which prancers are with leather shod,
 And ne’er disturb the eare :
 Heigh, downe dery, dery downe,
 With the hackney coaches downe.
 Their jumpings make
 The pavements shake
 Their noyse doth mad the towne.*

*’Twould save much hurt,
 Spare dust and dirt,
 Were they cleane out of towne.*

*Their terme’s neare done,
 And shall be begun
 No more in London towne.”*

Such were the London streets before the outbreak of the Great Fire, and they were not much better after. Wren’s hopes for broader roadways and wider spaces came to nothing, and in the matter of St Paul’s he had to agree to the close ring of houses and shops, which on all sides crowded the site. Happily there were then no “sky-scrapers,” nor even five-storied buildings, and the low-roofed buildings would not have the same cramping effect as the tall warehouses of modern times.

Humility, enthusiasm and ambition filled his heart, when the first laborious piece of the work had been done,

and the foundations were well and securely laid. For centuries past there had been a church upon this crest in the heart of the city. Perhaps, even before the coming of the Romans, it had been the scene of ancient rites and sacrifices. So it had gradually come to be looked upon as the general meeting-place for the town. Hot-headed preachers and thinkers mounted near St Paul's Cross to address the people. A stone's-throw away, stood a pillory. Martyrs were driven past here on their way to a last trial. Every state procession went down Ludgate Hill. St Paul's had for centuries been the silent witness of the people's history. It was more than a church; it was the symbol of a nation's hope in things unseen. Nevertheless Elizabeth had discovered to her horror that the splendid old building was the resort of every lounge and loafer. All kinds of merchandise were carried through the doorways. The ancient tomb of "Duke Humphrey" was used as a table for picnickers. Posters defiled the walls; and the voices of those busy over chaffering and bargaining were daily to be heard, not only in the churchyard, but within the church itself. With her usual energy Elizabeth soon put an end to these indecencies, by declaring that "any person who shall make any fray, or draw, or put out his hand-gun or dagg within the Cathedral Church of St Paul's or churchyard adjoining thereto . . . shall suffer imprisonment for two months."

Such were the historic ruins upon which Wren now set himself to rear up a vast and splendid cathedral. His genius for building soon made itself evident, even to the most prejudiced. He had had no special training in the science of architecture. But his abilities were so far-reaching, and his ideas so noble, that there was no doubt about his skill. To and fro among the gangs of workmen he went, his keen eyes noting every detail, his face stern

with thought about the work in hand. Years came and went, people had more or less forgotten the dreadful days of the Great Fire. In 1697 it was opened for service, though parts of it were still unfinished. But ten years later St Paul's was still building. Then came a morning in 1710 when the last stone was to be added. The streets were alive with curious and excited people, and a stranger stopping to inquire the reason of the bustle, would have been told that at such an hour the son of Sir Christopher Wren would place the last stone in the dome of the great cathedral. Hundreds of eager eyes looked on, but none gazed so earnestly as the grey-haired parent, who watched his son lay the final ornament in the marvellous building which had risen from his dreams. For thirteen years St Paul's had been open for service, but now the work was finished, and the glory of the great cathedral completed. It stood, a king among churches, overlooking the rows of low-roofed houses, and casting a guardian eye upon the slow-moving waters of the Thames. Even the most careless citizen went past the building with a proud feeling of possession, and there were many born with a craving for beauty, who found in its noble walls the expression of an emotion they had often tried vainly to put into words. As Wren turned home after this last scene in his great undertaking, what can have been his feelings? Pride, joy, and thankfulness, must have surged through his mind, presently, perhaps, giving place to more sober sensations. The work was ended. He had seen the old church reduced to ashes; he had made it rise again in a new and more splendid glory. Often he must have been haunted by fears lest he should die before his plans should be realised. He had tasted the full joy of creation; the bitter-sweet sense of an ending to work begun was now his. As he passed outside the

shadow of the noble cathedral, he must have felt a touch of sadness at the thought that the day of days in his career was over.

In a sense, too, his life was ended. For soon after, a cloud raised by envy and jealousy fell upon him, and in 1717, he who had spent his genius in designing St Paul's, found himself carelessly sent away from office. His dismissal roused the anger of all men of feeling, and Pope expressed the general pity and indignation in the line :

" Wren with sorrow to the grave descends."

But resentment could find no place in the mind of the great architect. He accepted the ingratitude of the nation with philosophy and mildness. He had run his race, and he was more than willing to withdraw from the press. A pleasant home at Hampton Court, sheltered him in his last days. Here he lived, with one visit a year to his cherished cathedral. Death came upon him in 1723, at the age of ninety-one, and he passed away, leaving behind him the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, Marlborough House, St Paul's Cathedral, and some fifty-two churches, as lasting proofs of the fire of his genius, and of a nature lofty enough to conceive what his genius was quick to bring to perfection.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

*"Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep,
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind."*

WORDSWORTH

THE eventful year of 1642 was drawing to a close, leaving England in the anguish of civil war. Christmas Day was at hand, and for the moment strife was hushed in carols and songs. In a lonely manor-farm at Woolsthorpe, near Grantham, there was more than usual gladness over the coming of a Christmas baby. Some months before this, the father of the child had died, and the baby was so tiny and feeble that it seemed as if his life had flickered in only to dwindle away like a cloud. But happily for posterity these fears proved wrong, and the child, Isaac Newton, lived to grow up and win for himself the proud title of England's greatest natural philosopher.

Grantham Grammar School was near, and here the boy was sent when he was about twelve years old. After the free, cheerful life of the farm at Woolsthorpe, he found school tiresome and dull. Lessons bored him, and he sank steadily to the bottom of his class. Here he might have remained, lonely and disgraced, had not a spiteful schoolfellow given him a sudden blow. The challenge seemed to waken Newton's spirit. He turned upon his enemy, and fought till he had got the victory. This physical contest, in which he had hardly hoped to come off triumphant, roused his ambition in other directions. The books that he had tossed into a corner were now



Sir Isaac Newton
Robert Walker
Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.



picked up and studied. Increased knowledge soon made him love learning, and before he left the school he had won the coveted post of head boy.

Meanwhile his inventive powers had been developing. When other boys were playing games, Newton would busy himself over making some ingenious mechanical toy, a windmill, a waterclock, or a rough sort of sundial. Sometimes a little group of schoolfellows would gather round him, looking with interest at his clever little contrivances. But as a rule they found him dull and silent, and they thought him stupid in his dislike of games. So he became a somewhat lonely schoolboy, and when his mother now suggested that as he was nearly fifteen he should come home to help with the duties of the farm, he made no objection.

For a time he went to and from market, carrying eggs and cheese under the guidance of a farm servant. But the eggs and cheese were left to look after themselves on the market stall, while Newton stole off to a quiet haunt to read his beloved books. With a sigh his mother agreed that it was quite useless trying to make him a farmer, and when one of his uncles, who had been at Cambridge, suggested that the boy should be sent to college, she made up her mind to try this plan of ending her difficulty. The news enraptured her son, and with a heart full of joyous hope, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1661.

Here he at once found himself in the midst of friends. He delighted in the air of learning which filled the University, and he set himself to his studies with such enthusiasm that very soon he had made himself known as a scholar among the rest of the undergraduates. To him, the hard facts of mathematics were more entrancing than any other study, and he eagerly devoured every book on the subject upon which he could lay his hands. Euclid came his way, but he found it so easy that he laid it by as "a

trifling book," and threw himself upon Descartes' Geometry. Before long, he began to make observations for himself, and he set himself to calculate and explain natural phenomena, such as the yellow halos often to be seen round the moon. Four happy, excited years went by, then an outbreak of plague forced him from Cambridge, shortly after he had taken his degree. Three years later he was back again, with all the distinction of a "fellow."

From this date his fame grew rapidly, and he attracted such attention that soon the other members of the University began to talk about him as "an unparalleled genius." In 1669 a professorship fell vacant, and he was offered the post. He accepted it gladly, and began a series of marvellous lectures upon optics. After this, outside recognition was not slow in coming, and in 1672 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, that brilliant gathering, founded at the time of the Restoration.

The years succeeding the accession of Charles II. were memorable years for scientists. The study of science as distinct from literature was only in its infancy. It still held the allurements of a subject just becoming specialised. Theories which for long had hung as hazy ideas in the air, became proved facts. England followed the example set by the continent of Europe, and the genius of the race for the moment expressed itself almost entirely in science. Membership of the Royal Society gave Newton opportunities for explaining his theories to men of understanding. One can imagine him in front of his audience, his face the most eager among all those eager countenances, explaining with nice exactness some difficult point in his lecture. He spared no pains to make himself understood, and often he adopted the most homely experiments to prove his point. The humility of his genius was strikingly shown in his ac-

knowledge of the vast problems he had left untouched. The quiet, dull schoolboy had been left far behind, and few would have known in this keen-eyed, eager professor, the idle youth who had flung his books disdainfully into a corner. A few critical, and even jealous eyes were to be picked out among the onlookers, watching the scientist's every movement. But most of the faces were full of pure admiration at the marvellous performances of one whom they gladly admitted as their superior. First and foremost among these admirers was Halley, the most generous and unselfish of disciples, the best and most affectionate of friends.

As Newton's fame increased, he became more and more involved in outside discussions. "I see," he said, "that I have made myself a slave to philosophy." But his natural courtesy made him weary himself out in explaining point after point to his critics, even at a time when he was greatly harassed by the lack of money for everyday affairs. Happily this last difficulty was set right by the University, who might well cherish a spirit of such clear genius. From 1666 till 1686 he was busy with problems about the laws of gravity. He unfolded his ideas to Sir Christopher Wren, Halley, and Hooke, and the brilliant quartet often met, to discuss with ease and enthusiasm points which were far beyond the grasp of the ordinary citizen. The Great Plague and the Great Fire ravaged the city of London. Parliament was torn with struggles over the Exclusion Bill. Statesmen rose and fell. Charles II. died, and James II. succeeded, and all this time Newton was busy getting ready his great treatise. In those years of study and deep thought he passed through the exaltation and the despair of genius seeking to give expression to some great truth. In all this he was helped by the bright friendship of Halley, who

never lost heart, whose faith never wavered. On that April day in 1686, when the manuscript treatise, "*Philosophia Naturalis Principia Mathematica*," was laid before the Royal Society, Halley's excitement almost equalled that of Newton. Congratulations soon poured in from the members, eager to outdo one another in expressing their wonder at the lecture. But there was one gloomy face among them. Hooke looked on with a lowering brow. He declared he had himself made the same discoveries, and he said he had at least expected to find his work mentioned in the treatise. Halley as usual rushed into the breach with the suggestion that Newton should write a preface, containing a reference to Hooke. At the same time he made it clear that he did not himself consider Hooke had any real claim. As for the Royal Society, he says in a letter to Newton: "I found they were all of opinion that nothing thereof appearing in print, nor on the books of the Society, you ought to be considered as the inventor. And if in truth, he (Hooke) knew it before you, he ought not to blame any but himself for having taken no more care to secure a discovery which he puts so much value on."

Newton, however, was much distressed by the incident. No man was freer from an intention to snatch an idea from a colleague, and his intensely chivalrous nature shrank from the very thought of such a deed. After all these years of study, was he to find the gilt of his discovery rubbed off by the jealous complaints of a disappointed rival? He settled the matter, however, by adding to his work the following sentence:—"The inverse law of gravity holds in all the celestial motions, as was discovered also independently by my countrymen, Wren, Hooke, and Halley." This satisfied everyone and in 1687 the *Principia* was published.

On two separate occasions Newton represented his university in Parliament. He had no desire to figure in the hot contests of the Commons, and he seldom spoke, though he conscientiously carried out the duties of his position. Here he met Charles Montagu, afterwards Earl of Halifax, who gave him a well-paid office at the Mint in 1696. This left him enough leisure to carry on his studies with an easy mind, though he was not the man to accept a post without accepting also its responsibilities. Whilst he was at the Mint, he toiled long and keenly on its behalf, carrying out with extreme care and ability the important operations connected with a recoinage.

About this same time (1696), John Bernouilli issued a challenge to the scientists of Europe, in the shape of two problems to be solved within six months. The time went by, and the problems were still a mystery. It was asked that the date for replies might be extended, and meanwhile the paper fell into the hands of Newton. At once his eye flashed fire, and he devoured the questions with eager look. Two days passed, and then Bernouilli received an innocent envelope containing the right answers. The paper was unsigned, but there was no mistaking the author. With a smile, Bernouilli remarked he "knew the claws of the lion." Newton had once more shown himself the master mind of the age.

Years passed by, bringing many honours to the boy who had once been meant to follow the quiet career of a farmer. He was made President of the Royal Society; he was smiled upon and visited by royalty; and in 1705 he was knighted. Newton accepted these signs of respect with the frankness of a child. His natural sweetness of temper made him grateful for every favour, but he was never deluded into mistaking the tawdry for the real. Nothing shook his devotion to science, and to the last he found his

greatest pleasure in working out problems. All the world heaped compliments upon him. He recognised the kindness which prompted them, but his simplicity remained untarnished: "I know not what I may appear to the world," he said, not long before he died, "but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, diverting myself in now and then finding a smother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

In this spirit he died in 1727, at the age of eighty-five, one of the finest geniuses England has ever produced, and one of the most simple-hearted.

INDEX

- Act of Settlement, *Introd.* 11
 "Addled" Parliament, 122
Advancement of Learning, 234, 237
 Aix-la-Chapelle, Treaty of, 62
 All Souls College, 206, 241
 America, Quakers in, 224
 Anne, Queen, general sketch, 85-94; her devotion to Marlborough, 86-87, 88, 89; her indiscretion, 91; her death, 93; referred to, *Introd.* 11, 153, 190, 191, 194, 227
Areopagitica, Milton's, 199
 Argyle, Archibald Campbell, Earl of, 172, 175-176, 179
 Armada, the, 239
 "Baby Charles," 99-100
 Bacon, Francis, Viscount St Albans, general sketch, 229-238; early days, 230; seeks promotion, 230-232; Attorney-General, 234; his fall, 235-236; his writings, 237
 Bacon, Sir Nicholas, 230
 Bagg, Sir James, 111
 Ballads of the Period, *Introd.* 16, *Introd.* 17, 26, 27, 54, 58, 61, 63, 65, 81, 91, 92, 93, 110, 133, 137, 139, 140, 141, 145, 146, 151, 152-153, 159, 174, 182, 184-185, 195, 215, 217, 225, 244
 Banks, Attorney-General, 118
 Bates, Dr, 59
 Baxter, Richard, general sketch, 213-221; early days, 213-214; as a preacher, 216-217; at the Restoration, 216; tried by Judge Jefferies, 218-220; death, 220-221; referred to, 208
 Berkeley, Judge, 118
 Bernouilli, John, 253
 Bill of Attainder, 127
 Bill of Security, 154
 Billesden, 96
 Bishops, the Seven, 72
 Bishops' War, the, 203
 Blake, Admiral Robert, 50
 Blenheim, battle of, 191, 192
 Bois-le-duc, siege of, 164
 Bolingbroke, Henry St John, Viscount, *Introd.* 11-13, 193, 194
 Boyle, Robert, *Introd.* 17
 Boyne, battle of the, 81
 Breadalbane, Earl of, 79
 Brentford, 228
 Browne, Sir Thomas, 209
 Buchanan, George, 26
 Buckingham, Duke of (see Villiers)
 Bunyan, John, 40, 208
 Burghley, Lord (see Cecil, William)
 Busby, Dr, 240
 Cabal, the, 138
 Cadiz, 101
 Caius College, 206
 Cambridge, 205
Careless Gallant, The, 61
 Carleton, Sir Dudley, 109
 Carnegie, Magdalene, 173
 Carnegie, Lord of Kinnaird, 173
 Carr, Robert, Viscount Rochester, 26
 Cecil, Robert, 233
 Cecil, William, 230, 231
 Chalgrove Field, battle of, 121
 Chancery, Court of, 46
 Charles I., King, general sketch, 29-38; his appearance, 29; his parliaments, 30-31; irregular taxation, 32; Civil War, 35; death, 36-37; referred to, *Introd.* 12, 113, 120, 121, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 131, 132, 198, 200, 202
 Charles II., King, general sketch, 52-66; arrival in England, 54-55; his character, 56-57; relations with France, 61-63; the Exclusion Bill

- Charles II., King—*continued*
 struggle, 64; referred to, *Introd.* 13,
Introd. 17, 74, 98, 144, 157, 166,
 185, 189, 211, 217, 250, 251
 Charles II., King of Spain, 83
 Chevalier de St George (see Pre-
 tender)
 Chigwell School, 223
 Christ's College, 206
 Churchill, John, Duke of Marlborough,
 general sketch, 188-196; early life,
 189; as a general, 191-192; attacks
 made upon, 192-193; his fall, 195;
 character, 196; referred to, 85, 86,
 87, 152
 Churchill, Sir Winston, 189
 Clarendon, Earl of (see Edward Hyde)
Clarendon Code, 60, 217
 Cleveland, John, 215
 Cleveland, Duchess of, 189
 Coke, Sir Edward, 231, 232, 233,
 236
 Colchester, 171
 Committee of Safety, 170
 Conventicle Act, First, 59-60, 217
 Convention, Cromwell's, 45
 Convocation, 22
 Cooper, Anthony Ashley, Earl of
 Shaftesbury, general sketch, 136-
 142; his character, 136-137; at
 Court, 138-139; upholds the Exclu-
 sion Bill, 139; supports Monmouth,
 142
 Cooper, Bishop, 23
 Corporation Act, 217
 Council of the North, 31, 125
 Covenant, the National, 33
 Cranford, Major-General, 41
 Cromwell, Oliver, general sketch, 39-
 51; early career, 39-40; during the
 civil war, 41-42; as a ruler, 42-51;
 his death, 50-51; referred to, *Introd.*
 14, 137, 168, 180, 181
 Cromwell, Richard, 50, 52, 181
 Cromwell, Robert, 39
- Darien Scheme, 83
 Declaration of Breda, 57, 170, 184
 Declaration of Indulgence (1672), 63
 Declaration of Indulgence (1687), 226
 Declaration of Right, 73
- Denton, 163
 Descartes, 250
 Digby, Anne, 156
 Digges, Dudley, 106
 Down, Bishop of (Jeremy Taylor), 211
 Drake, Sir Francis, 145
 Dryden, John, 134, 138, 234
 "Duke Humphrey," 245
 Dunkirk, 135
 Dunse Law, 33
 Dutch, the, 50, 79, 186
Dying Thoughts, 220
- East India Company, 83
 East Knoyle, 239
Eikon Basilike, 38
 Eland, Lord, 149
 Eliot, Sir John, general sketch, 105-
 114; in Parliament, 106; attacks
 Buckingham, 108; defies the
 Speaker, 112; in prison, 113; his
 character, 113-114; references to,
 116, 123
 Elizabeth, Queen, *Introd.* 13, 19, 20,
 21, 25, 50, 54, 87, 134, 197, 198,
 229, 230, 232, 239
 Essex Ballad, the, 140
 Essex, Robert Devereux, Earl of, 230,
 231, 232
Et cetera Oath, 215
 Evelyn, John, quotations from, 51, 55,
 62, 65, 71, 74, 75, 77, 182, 241,
 242
 Exclusion Bill, 67, 145, 158, 160
 Exeter College, 106
- Faber Fortune*, 238
 Fairfax, Thomas, Lord Fairfax,
 general sketch, 163-171; as a soldier,
 164-165; in Parliament, 165-166;
 during the Civil War, 167-169; at
 the Restoration, 176; referred to,
 42, 180
 Fairfax, Lady, 164, 168, 169
 Falconberg, Lord, 164
 Finch, Lady Mary, 149
 Fire, the Great, 186, 242, 243, 244,
 246, 251
 Five Mile Act, 217
 France, 50, 61
 Freeman, Mrs, 88

- Games, *Introd.*** 17
George I., *Introd.* 11, 13
Gilbert, Sir Humphrey, 105
Glencoe, 79, 81
Gloucester, 200
Godolphin, Sidney, Earl Godolphin,
 general sketch, 150-155; his char-
 acter, 150-151; his politics, 152-153;
 breaks with Queen Anne, 155;
 death, 155; referred to, 9c
Gorhambury, 237
Graham, James, Marquis of Montrose,
 general sketch, 172-179; early life,
 172-173; "Montrose's whimsie,"
 174; opposes Argyle, 175-176; his
 expedition, 178; his death, 179
Graham, John, of Claverhouse, 69
Graham, Sir James, 96, 97
Grantham, 240
Guizot, quoted, 117, 121, 197
Gunpowder Plot, 208

Habeas Corpus Act, 63, 70, 139, 148
Halifax, Charles Montagu, Earl of, 253
Halifax, George Savile, Marquis of
 (see Savile)
Hallam, Henry, quoted, 125
Halley, Edmund, 251
Hamilton, Earl, 80
Hampden, John, general sketch, 115-
 121; in Parliament, 116-117; his
 trial, 118; death, 121; referred to,
 32, 106, 131
Hampton Court Conference, 22, 247
Harley, Robert (see Oxford)
Hawkins, Sir John, 105
Hazelrigge, Arthur, 35
Henrietta Maria, Queen, 35, 101, 102,
 132, 177
Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, 62
Henry VIII., King, 60, 134, 158
Herbert, Lord Chief Justice, 71
High Commission, Court of, 31, 37,
 72, 202
Hill, Abigail (see Mrs Masham)
Hind, Old, 21
Hobbes, Thomas, 60, 71
Hooke, Robert, 251
Holles, Denzil, 35
Holmby House, 166, 167
Holy Dying, 210, 212
Humble Petition and Advice, 49

Huntingdon, town of, 39, 200
Hutchinson, Mrs, quoted, 49, 169
Hyde, Anne, Queen, 69, 85
Hyde, Edward, Earl of Clarendon,
 general sketch, 129-135; in Parlia-
 ment, 130-131; supports the king,
 131-133; his "History," 132; after
 the Restoration, 133; his fall, 134-
 135; referred to, 33, 59, 91, 115,
 182, 183

Indemnity, Bill of, 134
Instrument of Government, 47
Ironsides, Cromwell's, 42
Ireton, Henry, 167

Jack and Tom Smith, 99
James I., King, general sketch, 19-28;
 his coronation, 19; his appearance,
 20; religious opinions, 22; his parlia-
 ments, 24; his favourites, 26; his
 death, 27; referred to, *Introd.* 12,
 Introd. 14, 29, 54
James II., King, general sketch, 67-74;
 his character, 67-69; relations with
 France, 69; his flight, 72; life in
 France, 74; referred to, *Introd.* 13,
 Introd. 15, 81, 159, 190, 194, 226
James, Duke of York (see also
 James II.), 63, 64, 138, 146
Jefferies, Chief Justice, 70, 218, 219,
 220
Jennings, Sarah, Duchess of Marl-
 borough, 88, 94, 189, 190, 191, 195
Joyce, Cornet, 167

Kent, Marquis of, 89
Kidderminster, 216, 219
Kinsale, 81

La Hogue, battle of, 81
Lambert, General, 52, 169-170, 180,
 183
Lambeth, 204
Landen, siege of, 82
La Rochelle, 102
Laud, William, Archbishop of Canter-
 bury, general sketch, 197-204; his
 character, 198; promotion, 200-201;
 attempts reform in Scotland, 202-
 203; impeached, 203; executed,
 204; referred to, 32, 35

Life of Henry VII., 237
 Lincoln's Inn, Penn at, 223
 Liturgy, Laud's, 203
 London, James I.'s entry into, *Introd.*
 20; Charles II.'s entry, 54
 Londonderry, siege of, 81
 Long Parliament, 55, 200
 Louis XIV., King of France, 61, 69,
 74, 81, 82
 Luke, Oliver, 106

Macaulay, quoted, 25, 35, 79, 80, 84,
 144, 156, 226
 Mac Ian of Glencoe, 79
 Madrid, 99
 Magdalen College, 115
 Malplaquet, battle of, 189, 192
 Marlborough, Duke of (see Churchill)
 Marlborough Duchess of (see Sarah
 Jennings)
 Marlborough House, 247
 Marston Moor, battle of, 37, 42, 166,
 204
 Mary of Modena, Queen, 151
 Mary of Scotland, Queen, 20
 Mary II., Queen (wife of William III.),
 general sketch, 75-84; her character,
 76; attitude towards Anne, 86
 Masham, Mrs (Abigail Hill), 88, 89
 Mayflower King (see Charles II.)
 Milton, John, 171, 197, 206, 234
 Monck, George, Duke of Albemarle,
 general sketch, 180-187; in London,
 182-185; in Ireland, 186; his death,
 187; referred to, 52, 137, 169, 170
 Monmouth, James, Duke of, 68, 70,
 139, 142
 Monopolies, 32
 Montagu, Charles (see Halifax)
 Montrose, Marquis of (see Graham)
 Moray, Earl of, 179
 More, Sir Thomas, 224, 226
 "Morley, Mrs," 88
 Mutiny Act, 78

Nantwich, 181
 Namur, siege of, 82
 Naseby, battle of, 37
 National Covenant, 203
 Newbury, First battle of, 204
 Newmarket, 167
 Newspapers, 82

Newton, Sir Isaac, general sketch,
 248-254; early days, 248-249; con-
 nection with the Royal Society, 250-
 252; his fame, 253; death, 254;
 referred to, *Introd.* 17, 94, 222, 240
No Cross, no Crown, 224
 Northwich, 169
Novum Organum, 237
 Nunappleton, 169
 Nutt, Captain, 106-107

Oates, Titus, 63
 Olivarez, 99
 Orange, Prince of (see William III.)
 Ordination Act, 217
 Ormonde, Duke of, 186
 Oudenarde, battle of, 191
 Overstone, 209
 Oxford, Parliament at, 107
 Oxford, Earl of (Robert Harley),
 Introd. 11

Parliament, Convention, the, 1660, 57
 Partition Treaties, 83
 Penn, William, general sketch, 222-
 228; early days, 222-223; a Quaker,
 224; in America, 225-226; death, 228
 Pennsylvania, 225, 227
 Pepys, Samuel, quoted, *Introd.* 15, 37,
 51, 53, 57, 59, 61, 135, 186, 223,
 238
Persons of Resolution, 214
 Petition of Right, 30, 39, 103, 111,
 124, 201
 Peterborough, Lady, *Introd.* 15
 "Philosophia Naturalis Principia
 Mathematica," 252
 Pitt, William, Earl of Chatham, 43
 Plague, the Great, 251
 Politics, modern, birth of, 153
 Pope, Alexander, 247
 Popish Plot, 63
 Port Eliot, 105
 Presbyterians, 36, 57
 Pretender, the Old (James Edward
 Stewart), *Introd.* 11, 86, 93, 151,
 194
 Protectorate Parliament, First, 44,
 46
 Prynne, William, 202, 204
 Puritanism, *Introd.* 16, 22, 32, 40, 57
 Pym, John, 35, 106, 120

"*Quaker's Farewell to England*," 225
Quaker sect, the, 223-225

Raleigh, Sir Walter, 105
Ramillies, battle of, 191
Reading, town of, 198
Reformation, *Introd.* 14, 22
Remonstrance, the Grand, 112, 120,
130

Revolution of 1688, 73, 91, 153, 227
Rhé, island of, 102, 103
Richelieu, Cardinal, 102
"Rider of the White Horse," 166
Ripon, Treaty of, 203
Rochester, Viscount (see Carr)
Rochester, Lawrence Hyde, Earl of, 64
Root and Branch Bill, 130
Royal Society, *Introd.* 17, 239, 250,
252
Rump, the, 53, 54, 169
"*Rump's Farewell*," the, 182
Rupert, Prince, 42, 121
Ruscomb, 228
Rust, Bishop, 210, 212
Rye House Plot, 64
Ryswick, Treaty of, 82, 84

Sacheverell, Dr, 90-91, 154
St David's, bishopric of, 200
St George, Chevalier de (see Pre-
tender)
St Germain, 74, 194
St Giles Cathedral, 203
St John's College, 198
St John, Henry (see Bolingbroke)
St John, Oliver, 130
St Paul's Cathedral, 244, 245, 247
Salisbury, Bishop of, 82
Savile, George, Marquis of Halifax,
general sketch, 143-149; "A Trim-
mer," 143; his tolerance, 145;
opposes the Exclusion Bill, 146-147;
death 149; referred to, 158
"*Scotsman's Lament*," the, 93
Scotland, 19, 32
Secret Treaty of Dover, 138
Sedgemoor, battle of, 68
Settlement, Act of, *Introd.* 11
Sejanus, Buckingham compared to,
108
Shaftesbury, Earl of (see Cooper)
Ship money, 32, 117

"Short" Parliament, the, 33
Shrewsbury, Duke of, 89
Slave traffic, 225
Slingsby, Sir Henry, 165
Solemn League and Covenant, 169
Sophia, Electress of Hanover, *Introd.*
11

Spain, 50, 61
Spencer, Robert, Earl of Sunderland,
general sketch, 156-162; his char-
acter, 156-157; his changes in
politics, 158-160; death, 162
Stair, Master of (John Dalrymple), 79
Star Chamber, 31, 37
"Steenie" (George Villiers), 99-100
Steinkirk, battle of, 82
Stevens, John, 110
Strafford, Earl of (see Wentworth)
Strode, William, 35
Sunderland, Earl of (see Spencer)
"*Swearers Chorus*," the, 65
Swift, Jonathan, 195

Taylor, Jeremy, Bishop of Down,
general sketch, 205-212; early days,
205-206; sermon at Oxford, 208;
Rector of Overstone, 209; Bishop
of Down, 211; death, 212

Temple, Sir William, 62
Test Act, 63, 67, 71, 148
"*The True Law of Free Monarchy*,"
24

"Thorough," Strafford's system of,
126, 197, 199

Tintern Abbey, 172

Tonnage and poundage duties, 30

Torrey, 75

"*Tory Pill to Purge Whig Melan-
choly*," 91

Treaty of Berwick, 165

Treaty of Dover, 62, 138

Treaty of Ripon, 203

Treaty of Uxbridge, 204

"Trimmer, A," 143

Trinity College, 205, 247, 249

Triple Alliance, the, 62

Truth Exalted, 224

Uniformity, Act of, 59, 217

Union of England and Scotland, 92,
153

Uppingham, 207, 209
 Uxbridge, Treaty of, 204

Vere, Anne (see Lady Fairfax)

Vere, Sir Horace, 164

Vernon, Judge, 118

Villiers, George, Duke of Buckingham,
 general sketch, 95-104; promotion,
 96-98; in Spain, 98-100; his op-
 ponents, 102-103; character, 104;
 impeached, 108; referred to, 26, 123,
 236

"*Volpone*," 90, 154

Voltaire, 89

Wadham College, 241

"*Waking Vision, A*," 133

Walters, Lucy, 139

War of the Spanish Succession, 191

Wentworth, Thomas, Earl of Strafford,
 general sketch, 122-128; his oratory,
 123; changes his political opinions,

Wentworth, Thomas—*continued*

125; in Ireland, 126; his trial,
 127; death, 128 (see also 35, 103,
 106, 116, 201, 204)

Westminster School, 240

Wilkins, Dr, 241

William III., general sketch, 75-84;
 arrival in London, 76; his character,
 76; his administration, 78-79; in
 Ireland, 81; foreign policy, 81-83;
 his death, 84; referred to, *Introd.*
 15, 72, 144, 152, 153, 157, 160, 161,
 188, 190, 191, 194, 227

Wolsey, Cardinal, 158

Woolsthorpe, 248

Worcester, Bishop of, 215

Wordsworth, William, 172

Wren, Sir Christopher, general sketch,
 239-247; at Oxford, 241; re-
 builds St Paul's, 243; end of life,
 247; referred to, 61, 251, 252

"*Yorkshire Redcaps*," 165







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